ENGLISH IDYLS AND OTHER POEMS

1842–1855

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES, BY

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PREFACE

It is suggested that these poems[1] should be studied in three parts, each of which constitutes the work of about one term. They are grouped together under various headings to enable the pupil to grasp more easily (1) the emergence of Tennyson's artistic ideal, (2) his skill in various kinds of poetry, (3) the great ethical Truths which permeate his life and work. It is hoped that in this way more help may be given in the development of literary taste and criticism, and also that pupils who are beginning to appreciate literature may be led to notice the difference between good style and bad in both prose and poetry. A special feature of the book is the printing in the Appendix of several of the earlier poems as they were first published. These should be carefully compared with the later and greatly improved versions. As regards the second point, it is hoped that senior students may be led to notice and compare various methods, for instance, of treating nature, not forgetting the important influence of the romantic revival; other points which will arise are the treatment of classical subjects, the growth of the psychological poem, the dramatic

[1] Shorter Poems and Lyrics, 1833–42 (*The Lady of Shalott* and other poems) and English Idyls and other Poems, 1842–55.

instinct and Tennyson's limitations in this respect. Thirdly, it will be of interest to notice the ideals of life and conduct which begin to come out in these earlier poems, thus making them an excellent preparation for the more advanced study of the *Idylls of the King* as a whole.

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INTRODUCTION

TO

SHORTER POEMS AND LYRICS (1833–42)

AND

ENGLISH IDYLS AND OTHER POEMS (1842–55)

THERE are two points of special interest attaching to the poems contained in this book. First, they represent three definite periods in the development of Tennyson's mind and art; second, we shall see that they bring out one of his most remarkable characteristics as a poet.

(A) *Tennyson's early life.* His life was somewhat uneventful. He was born in 1809 in a Lincolnshire rectory. Boyhood and youth were passed quietly in a cultured home, but his poetical gifts soon attracted attention. By the age of twelve, he tells us, he had written an epic of 6,000 lines in the manner of Walter Scott, and hundreds of lines in Popeian metre; later we hear of Byronic tragedies, sonnets, and dramas.

Some of these very boyish attempts were published in a little volume in 1827, entitled *Poems by Two Brothers.* Mr. Stopford Brooke comments on them thus: they were 'made up partly of bold noise and partly of sentimentality. They are without a trace of originality, force, or freshness—faded imitation of previous poets, chiefly of Byron. It is one of the literary puzzles of the world that certain great poets, as, for example, Shelley, and here Tennyson, write trash in their boyhood; and within a year or two step on to a level of original power.'

In 1828 Tennyson went to Trinity College, Cambridge, and there began his memorable friendship with Arthur Hallam.

In 1830 came out his first serious attempt at verse—a volume entitled '*Poems, chiefly Lyrical,* by Alfred Tennyson'.

Matthew Arnold is said to have discovered in one of them[1] the germ of future powers, but Mr. Churton Collins is probably nearer the truth when he says: 'They are the poems of a fragile and somewhat morbid young man, in whose temper we seem to see a touch of Hamlet, a touch of Romeo, and more healthily a touch of Mercutio. Their most promising characteristic is . . . versatility. . . . Their worst fault is affectation.' Lack of temperance in expression, too many words, producing confusion in thought, all mark the youthfulness of the poet. His friends, however, applauded, and, if we may judge from Arthur Hallam's essay in the *Englishman*, talked only too flatteringly about him.

Three years later, in December, 1832,[2] a second and much more ambitious book was published containing thirty new poems, and then it was that the full force of criticism fell upon him.

The present volume begins with these poems of 1833; it passes on to those contained in two subsequent volumes published in 1842, and it concludes with a few still later ones, amongst which we shall find the great *Ode to the Duke of Wellington*, *Tithonus*, and *The Voyage*.

Thus, passing over the *Juvenilia*, which promised so little, we have in the volume of 1833 the work of Tennyson's youth. We shall notice weak lines, we shall see him halting in rhythm, prone at times to diffuseness, affectation, sentimentality. But we shall see through it all the emergence of a lofty ideal in art, and a still more noble aim in morals.

We shall see that between 1833 and 1842 an immense change took place; that the same poems reappear altered and cut down, together with new work of commanding originality. Even the carping voice of criticism was silenced, and Tennyson took his place among the foremost poets of the age.

Lastly, we shall have to notice the characteristics of a few poems written after 1842, which are the work of the poet in his maturity.

(B) *Causes of his great development.* Our first question must be, what were some of the causes which produced so great

[1] The Cambridge Prize Poem of 1829, *Timbuctoo*.
[2] The volume was dated 1833.

an artistic development between the years 1833 and 1842? In *Merlin and the Gleam*, published long afterwards, in Tennyson's old age, there is a retrospect of his own literary life. He looks back at the awakening of power, at the dawn of the vision of the ideal Beauty, the first wavering notes of heavenly music; then follow words which undoubtedly apply to the period we are considering.

He glances at the hostile attitude of 'a barbarous people' to 'the croak of a Raven who crost it', and at the despondency and hopelessness which followed; a gloom lightened only by the Master's whisper, 'Follow the Gleam'.

(i) *Severe criticism.* In plain English, Tennyson suffered from a criticism which has been variously characterized as stupid, unjust, and even brutal. Mr. Lockhart, in the *Quarterly* (considered then 'the next book to God's Bible'), in a strain of bombastic praise hailed another star in 'that milky way, of which the lamented Keats was the harbinger'. The young poet's sympathy with nature was 'ludicrous', and *Œnone* was to be altogether reviled, since the same line was repeated in it no less than sixteen times. One unfortunate little poem was held up to peculiar scorn. It ran thus:—

> O darling room, my heart's delight,
> Dear room, the apple of my sight,
> With thy two couches soft and white,
> There is no room so exquisite,
> No little room so warm and bright,
> Wherein to read, wherein to write.

'We entreat our readers,' said the *Quarterly*, 'to note how even in this little trifle the singular taste and genius of Mr. Tennyson break forth. In such a dear little room a narrow scribbler would have been content with one sofa, and that one he would probably have covered with black moïair, or red cloth, or a good striped chintz; how infinitely more characteristic is white dimity! 'tis, as it were, a type of the purity of the poet's mind!'

Blackwood's treatment was hardly less severe: it considered Tennyson 'hampered by a puerile partiality for particular forms of expression', and 'self-willed and perverse in his infantile vanity'.

In fact, even so friendly a critic as Mr. Spedding acknowledged that these early poems betrayed 'an over-indulgence in the luxuries of the senses, a profusion of splendours, harmonies, perfumes, gorgeous apparel, luscious meats and drinks and creature comforts, which rather pall upon the sense, and make the glories of the outward world to obscure a little the world within'.

The way in which Tennyson met this criticism is characteristic. That he felt it deeply is evident. *The Lover's Tale* was withdrawn from publication, and was not printed again (except in a pirated copy) until 1879. Nothing more appeared for nine years, and Tennyson wrote to Mr. Spedding, 'I do not wish to be dragged forward again in any shape before the reading public at present, particularly on the score of my old poems, most of which I have so corrected (particularly *Œnone*) as to make them much less imperfect.'

(ii) *Nine years of study and silence.* A weaker man might have given up in despair; Tennyson set to work to study, to travel, to think. The classics, the modern poets of Italy, Germany, England, natural history, geology, astronomy, metaphysics, theology; these and many other subjects were taken up, and left lasting effects on his mind.

But he was also to learn in another school. 'Ease and prosperity may do for the *commoners* in character, but without suffering is no man *ennobled*.'[1]

(iii) *Private troubles.* His father had died in 1831, and the old home was broken up; his own uncertain prospects led to his marriage with Miss Sellwood being indefinitely postponed. Then the greatest blow of all fell. In September, 1833, came the news of Arthur Hallam's sudden death in Austria. What that shock meant to Tennyson can only be realized by a careful study of *In Memoriam*. 'It blotted out all joy from my life, and made me long for death.' *The Two Voices* was written about this time, and shows the depths through which he passed.

> 'Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,
> Nor any train of reason keep:
> Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep.'
>

[1] Martineau, *Study of Religion.*

'Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?
There is one remedy for all.'

'You who keep account', writes Mrs. Browning,

'Of crises and transitions in this life,
Set down the first time Nature says plain "No"
To some "yes" in you, and walks over you
In gorgeous sweeps of scorn'

.

'That 's bitter and convincing.'[1]

And not seldom does this encounter take one peculiar form—a first realization, no matter how, of the grim reality of death. The very young author talks glibly about it, and it is a favourite subject with the sentimental, but that is quite a different matter from the experience to which we now refer.

Browning speaks of it,—and his words are true of most thoughtful people,—when he says that it is the moment—

When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form.[2]

Tennyson up to this had played with shadows, much like his own *Lady of Shalott*. Now Life's 'mirror cracked from side to side' and human love drew back shivering at the cold touch of Reality. No man could pass through a time like this and be unchanged by it. Tennyson emerged with deeper knowledge and a wider outlook, and all this is manifest in his poetry.

When the poems of 1842 did appear, there was no doubt from the very first as to their reception. The *Quarterly* made generous amends for its earlier attack, and found the volume a 'real addition to our literature'. Edgar Allan Poe, Dickens, Emerson, all joined in enthusiastic praise of the new poet.

[1] *Aurora Leigh.* [2] *Prospice.*

(C) *Artistic ideal.* We proceed now to notice in detail how the poems of 1833 and 1842, if compared, show first the emergence of a lofty artistic ideal.

(i) *Beauty of rhythm.* To appreciate the great advance made by Tennyson in this respect we need only read the opening of *Œnone*, as it was in 1833, and again as it appeared corrected in 1842. In its later form should be noticed the power of fitting sound to sense, the quiet dreamy rhythm of the first eight lines, only broken in the ninth by the sound of the rushing water falling against the rocks, and then

In cataract after cataract to the sea.

Again the smooth musical verse is resumed as we look at the far distance where the topmost peak 'stands up and takes the morning'.

This is not nearly so marked in the earlier verse. The vowel sounds are not so skilfully managed, and the effect is not so varied; there is even an unpleasing repetition of the *a* sound in the first and second lines.[1]

(ii) *Clearness and brevity.* The same passage in its altered form shows immense improvement in clearness. The earlier landscape is difficult to picture, whereas in the later the eye travels easily from the foreground, with its flowers and torrent, up the ravine, where the mist lingers among the pines, and so on to the glittering city with its background of mountains.

The best example of that increased power which is obtained by condensation is *The Palace of Art*,[1] in which the alterations and omissions were so great as to make it almost a new work.

Again, in the early volume, the *Dream of Fair Women* began with four stanzas,[1] beautiful indeed, but curiously irrelevant. They are omitted in 1842, and the poem begins with the reference to Chaucer.

(iii) *Nature-painting.* Mr. Stopford Brooke notices that Tennyson's best work in nature-painting is of two kinds. It occurs on the one hand when he is describing scenery with which he is extremely familiar, such as the Lincolnshire coast and the Isle of Wight, or, on the other hand, when he is inventing, painting from the visions of his own

[1] See Appendix of early versions.

soul. This work of constructive imagination is of course based indirectly on what has been *seen*, but it is the work of the combining and selective skill of the beauty-loving mind. The result is often an ideal picture of transcendent loveliness—

> The light that never was on sea or land.

Words seem only to veil its beauty, but their dim suggestion enhances the charm, and the mind of each reader, according to the power that is in it, must do the rest.

The two versions of *Œnone* form a most striking example. The scenery was originally a reminiscence of the Pyrenees. Tennyson had been there in 1830, but the weird rich beauty of this southern land was not familiar, and there is a certain confusion in his description of it. He does not produce a clear impression of the valley, guarded by its solemn peak, nor the curious granite walls of the *cirque*. When we turn to the version of 1842 the change is great. All is clear to the inward eye; it is an 'invented landscape', and every word tells. Even more remarkable are the changes introduced into the story of the actual coming of the goddesses. The description of the flowers is instinct with life, and the new line—

> And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,

is, as Mr. Stopford Brooke says, 'the centre light and passion of the whole'.

The three last points which should be noticed in the development of Tennyson's art are connected with his creativeness and his invention of new forms.

(iv) *Character-drawing.* In the poems of 1833 he tried his hand at what may be called character-drawing. Most of these studies are solitary types of women, such as *Mariana in the South*, *Margaret*, &c. They represent the strong tendency of the age to individualism, but they lack the complex force and passion which Browning put into his *Fifty Men and Women*. A character isolated from its human environment always presents peculiar difficulties, and Tennyson's earlier attempts are colourless and fail to rouse our sympathy. There is a decided advance in the volume of 1842. The same poems appear very much

altered, and there are also new ones of much greater power. Simple pictures of youthful love, amid idyllic surroundings, such as we find in *The Gardener's Daughter*, or *The Talking Oak*, show a firmer, more sympathetic touch, and two—*Love and Duty* and *Locksley Hall*—are full of the passion and complexity of real life. In the second of these poems we find that beautiful simile, which Tennyson himself considered the finest he had ever made:—

Love took up the Glass of Time, and turned it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

(v) *Classical form.* In the volume of 1833 there were two classical poems, *Œnone* and *The Lotos-eaters*.[1] Tennyson's intention seems to have been to take some one noble idea embodied in Greek legend, and then, by infusing modern thought into it, demonstrate its truth for every age. The alterations in *Œnone* have already been fully dealt with, but some striking ones also occur in *The Lotos-eaters*. Stanza 6 was added, beginning

'Dear is the memory of our wedded lives',

evidently to bring out more clearly the disastrous moral effects of the fruit—forgetfulness of home, the wearing-out of conscience, 'the eye of the soul'. The last twenty-three lines of the earlier version were omitted, probably as being too light and jingling for the increasing solemnity of the thought, and instead we have the ominous conception of a thoroughly Lucretian Olympus—smiling Lotos-eating deities, careless of the plague-stricken world. So the singular unity of the poem is kept up throughout, and the final impression is one of fear, for even the idly dreaming gods may wake to anguish.

(vi) *Allegorical style.* Lastly, in the volume of 1833, we find one poem where Tennyson tries a new and exceedingly difficult form, that of symbolism or allegory, which though it embodies some great ethical truth, yet partakes of the nature rather of vision than narrative.

The poem is *The Palace of Art*. Much is said elsewhere

[1] See Appendix.

about the matter; here we would only notice the immense improvements in form and style which Tennyson introduced into the version of 1842. Weak lines, prolixity, lack of human interest, confusion in the sequence of thought, are all faults to which such a form lends itself; but in the latest version every blemish of this kind has been removed, and it may be regarded as one of the most perfect of Tennyson's works. Many beautiful stanzas were ruthlessly excised for the sake of keeping the thought dramatically clear and preparing for the catastrophe of the close.

In the volume of 1842 there is one other masterly example of the same difficult style, i.e. *The Vision of Sin*, but in this even Tennyson's critical faculty found but little to revise or alter in subsequent editions.

(D) *Moral ideal.* We pass on now to notice in these two volumes the steady emergence of a lofty moral ideal. Even in 1833 we see Tennyson's preference for a peculiar type of character, a type we may call essentially Teutonic, for it is akin to that which appears again and again in the finest English and German literature. It may be said to have two chief elements. (*a*) First, a strong tendency to action and progress, as opposed either to the sentimental or mystical and dreamy type. Its chief characteristic is a bracing self-control, a level-headed devotion to duty in the ordinary things of life. It is unmistakably heard in the words of Pallas Athene, and finds sublime expression in the *Ode to the Duke of Wellington* and in the *Morte d'Arthur*. (*b*) Second, a strong sense of the value of endurance even amid apparent failure. *Merlin and the Gleam*, which, as already mentioned, is really a retrospect of Tennyson's literary life, throws much light on these earlier poems, and especially on this peculiar quality. It, too, is a solemn vision, and vividly recalls the *Ulysses* of earlier days. There under the sea-cliffs we see the grey Magician, Arthur's seer, and again the mysterious deep moans round with many voices, and the ship strains at her anchor. Merlin is dying, but he tells how long ago he had been awakened from slumber by music and light, a glimpse of a bright Ideal which he needs must follow. Are we wrong in thinking that there is something of this deeper meaning in *The Day-dream*, the

rousing to 'newer knowledge', and 'truth that sways the souls of men',—the fair girl who by the touch of love awakes to follow her Prince to the greater glories of his father's court?

> Beyond the hills, and far away,
> Beyond their utmost purple rim,
> Beyond the night, across the day,
> Through all the world she followed him.

But again the scene changes. Many things may obscure the light. The gleam hovers in desolate hollows and wraiths of the mountain. And in the earlier poems, too, Tennyson is conscious of the blinding power of the pleasures of sense.

In *The Vision of Sin*, in *Love and Duty*, in *The Sisters*, we see the need of this patient endurance of temptation, lest the darkness gather,

> the night is long,
> And the longer night is near.[1]

Then the guiding light hovers over gentler, more peaceful scenes; it recalls the simple loves of village youth and maiden,[2] and all the homely joys and sorrows of the peasant and the labourer—yet all purified and ennobled by singleness of aim, and the doing of duty without murmur or complaint. Again, statelier pictures follow, the glory of the court, beauty, romance, chivalry, culminating in the central figure of Tennyson's poetry,—'Arthur the blameless'.

But the pomp of intellect, and its very greatness and glory, test endurance, and nowhere is this brought out more clearly than in *The Palace of Art*. It is the temptation to the Pride of Life, to set Culture above the Love of God.

> And he that shuts Love out in turn shall be
> Shut out from Love and on her threshold lie
> Howling in outer darkness.

Another danger evidently felt by Tennyson was that of a false ideal, or one which at best is not the highest. We

[1] *Vision of Sin.* [2] Cf. *The Gardener's Daughter.*

see the germ of it in *St. Simeon Stylites*—the curious attraction of asceticism. It appears more vividly, and in a far more subtle and perplexing form, in the contrast between Galahad and Arthur, and in the question which Tennyson forces upon us, which of the two led the higher life. But this is a problem rather for the student of the *Idylls*. Then

> Clouds and darkness
> Closed upon Camelot.

In the poem of his old age, to which we have referred above,[1] the poet looks back to that time when first he faced Death, who had robbed him of his friend; when the 'Gleam' faded to 'a wintry glimmer' and all but disappeared. It had been a shadow of great darkness; a foretaste indeed of that

> —last dim weird battle of the west.
> A death-white mist slept over sand and sea,
> Whereof the chill, to him who breathed it, drew
> Down with his blood, till all his heart was cold
> With formless fear.

Even upon the heroic figure of the blameless king settled the mists of failure, defeat, and perplexity; and the darkness of that tragedy enveloped also the poet's soul. Yet in the end doubt yields to faith, and the Gleam emerges from the shadows into a new refulgence. And so the vision of the early days was more than fulfilled.

To the last Tennyson kept before him this thought of brave endurance to the end, the ideal of Duty, the deep assurance—

> He, that ever following her commands,
> On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
> Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
> His path upward, and prevail'd,
> Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
> Are close upon the shining table-lands
> To which our God Himself is moon and sun.[2]

[1] *Merlin and the Gleam.* See p. ix.
[2] Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington.

Such a faith upheld this man through a long life, till in extreme old age he himself came to the 'land's last limit', and found, as in the years gone by, that it was *not* the End, but indeed an 'untravell'd world, whose margin fades for ever and for ever'. Thus 'the low dark verge of Life' became indeed 'the twilight of eternal day'.

Not of the sunlight,
Not of the moonlight,
Not of the starlight!

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PART I

GROUP A. CHARACTER SKETCHES

In the early part of the nineteenth century, men's minds were greatly troubled by the wave of democratic thought which was sweeping over Europe. The state of France, the spread of revolutionary literature, the Chartist agitations, combined to produce in men of culture a sense of fear, lest things should be carried too far, and the levelling of all social distinctions should end in dull monotony. The result of this was a tendency to individualism,[1] an intense desire to develop on free lines, to worship and follow the one man of strongly marked individuality rather than conform to the rule of the many.

Another effect was to reawaken interest in character-drawing,—in the production, that is, of short poems giving definite types of men and women more or less isolated from their human environment. The fashion compares curiously with a similar tendency in the drama of the seventeenth century. In the Jonsonian Comedy of Humour, we also see some special characteristic in a man isolated and carried to such an excess, that sometimes personality is almost lost, and we sympathize with him no more than with an abstraction. If this is a danger even in the Drama, much more is it likely to occur in a short poem where the outside human element is wholly wanting, and the type stands out alone, sharp, and colourless. We have included seven poems in this group: five are simply pictures, women with 'elaborate dresses' and fanciful names.

[1] See Introduction, p. xiii.

1. *Mariana in the South* represents a forsaken girl. In the volume of 1830 Tennyson had published a little poem—inspired by a line in *Measure for Measure*[1]—*Mariana in the Moated Grange.* There the background is grey and sombre, and the gloom is that of the Lincolnshire flats. In the later poem the scene is in Southern France and the colouring is deep and rich: the orange and crimson of sunset, the deep blue of a sky glittering with stars. The figure, however, is equally statuesque and lifeless, simply that of a woman's desolation.

2. In *Eleänore*, there is more elaboration of detail; the impression of colour is curiously vivid, yet even here there is little variety: on analysis we find it resolves itself nearly always into either gold or purple. Imperial, eastern beauty is what we see, but so motionless that even Passion droops his wing and 'sleeps'.

3. *Fatima* is an attempt to describe the wilder and more sensuous phases of love; to isolate it for the moment from its grander aspects, and to show it only in its lower form, purely personal attraction, which is regardless of others and careless of Duty. Tennyson's deepest convictions were so far from this, that we cannot wonder that the poem is not a success.

4. *Rosalind* appeared in the volume of 1833, but was suppressed, and not printed again until 1884. This has more vitality than the preceding poems, and is charming enough in its picture of young sparkling life; the careless girl, untouched by passion, a creature of the breezy moorland and the sunshine, is much more attractive to modern English thought than the languid southern beauty.

5. *Margaret* is another pretty though less energetic type of English girl, but again Tennyson seems careful to point out that it is a picture of a soul asleep. Apart from the shock and struggle of existence, these beautiful but phantom women know neither real sorrow nor real joy. Self-centred passion is no more the whole of life than the thoughtless gaiety of the child; they who would *know*, must taste it 'to the lees', must be willing to put out on the untravelled sea of being and suffering, of mystery and darkness.

6. In *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*, the sixth poem we have included in this group, there is the beginning of something quite different, more complex and therefore more human.

The haughty girl, trifling with the men whom she is too proud to love, is a striking picture, and,—likely enough,—drawn from life, while the pathos of the mother's agony forms a dark background to the selfish indifference of high birth.

7. Lastly, among the character sketches we have placed *A Dream of Fair Women.* It was first published in 1833, but

[1] 'At the moated grange resides this dejected Mariana.'—*Measure for Measure*, iii. 1.

no poem was subjected to so much alteration and revision, and the immense improvements in the later versions illustrate in a remarkable way the development of Tennyson's critical sense. It also shows a great advance in the delineation of character.

In Cleopatra and in Jephthah's daughter, standing as they do in sharp contrast, we have at last two living figures; dream-shapes they may be, but the passion and glory of the past throbs in them still. The one restlessly pants for dominion, even in the realms of the dead, the other still glows with the triumph of national victory and self-sacrifice.

GROUP B. NATURE-PAINTING

There is hardly a poem of Tennyson's which might not be used as an illustration of his love for Nature.

This little group has been selected, not because they exemplify it in a higher degree than others, but because they point to certain important elements which go to make up success in nature-painting.

1. In *The Miller's Daughter*, we have a story of village love, simple, pure, and enduring, set in all the homely beauty of English country life. There is no description of the landscape, but the picture grows before us till the whole is perfect and harmonious. No poem shows more clearly Tennyson's power of painting a background in sympathy with human life and emotion. It is to these lovers 'a happy earth'. The cheerful sounds of morning greet us: the skylark, the soft cooing of the doves in the woodlands, the noisy millstream. Moreover, it is springtime. The delicate white of the chestnut blossoms, the breezy blue of the sky, the quivering sunbeams, all combine to set off the figure of the girl leaning from the window over the flowers. When the poem ends, age and sorrow have touched the lovers, but love has outlived it all, and the sunset is rosy.

2. In *The May Queen* the colours are even more remarkable. The earth is brilliant with spring flowers. Honeysuckle is round the porch, cowslips are over the hill,

'And the wild marsh marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray.'

But a change comes, and all Nature sympathizes with the dying girl.

'When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light,
You'll never see me more in the lone gray fields at night;
When from the dry dark wold the summer airs blow cool
On the oat grass and the sword grass and the bulrush in the pool.'

Three times, to her fancy, the music of the March winds seems

to call the girl's soul; her time has come, and the brightness of dawn speaks to her of the light of God in a blessed home.

3. In *The Hesperides*, the suiting of sound to sense, and the power of delineating colour, are the most striking elements in the nature-painting. Sleepless, graceful, slow—the mystic dance of the nymphs permeates the metre. The warm southern light glows on the Atlantic blue, the silver star shines on the hallowed fruit-tree, guarded by the red-combed dragon with his purple folds.

4. The little poem of *The Blackbird* reminds us chiefly of Tennyson's sympathetic knowledge of the habits of wild things, and his keen observation of bird life in particular.

5. In *The Death of the Old Year* the whole poem breathes the stillness of a world under snow. The night is starry and cold. Slowly, with a sound of lingering regret, the past with its memories slips away, and then immediately with the crowing of the cock the charm begins to break, the cricket chirps, and

> 'There 's a new face at the door, my friend,
> A new face at the door.'

GROUP C. PATRIOTIC OR POLITICAL POEMS

The five poems in this group throw considerable light on Tennyson's attitude towards human Freedom and Progress. The times were very difficult. Reform was in every one's mouth in 1832, but it was taken up rather by the well-to-do middle classes, and promised but little for the suffering poor. Still, the very fact of democratic ideas being in the air disturbed society, and the result was deep-seated unrest, and even riots and disturbances.

This state of things produced in Tennyson, and in many like him, a distrust of what he considered 'mob fury', 'raw haste', and 'lawless din'; the anxious fear

> lest over haste
> Should fire the many wheels of change

on which he dwells in his unpublished poem *The Statesman*.[1] A nice balance between the tendencies of the present, and the traditions of the past, is there held up as the pattern of true statesmanship. A strong English common sense, loyalty to the Constitution, suspicion of anything too reactionary or subversive of law and order, such were the characteristics of the Liberal-Conservatism of the age.

This was a difficult point of view to introduce into poetry.

3. *Freedom* 'turning to scorn with lips divine the *falsehood*

[1] See *Life of Tennyson*, p. 93.

of extremes' is not so attractive as what Tennyson calls the 'blind hysterics of the Celt', the impulsive pity which marks the men of one idea, who in that same sacred cause of Freedom have pourèd out their blood like water.

1. The passionate *Sonnet* which we put first was published in 1833, and reprinted without alteration in 1872. It is entitled 'On the result of the late Russian invasion of Poland', and shows how Tennyson, at least in youth, felt the power of that enthusiasm which does not stay to argue or balance possibilities. Here indeed there is but little patience for the 'sober dictates of Policy and Precedent'.

When we come to the second, however, *You ask me, why,* &c., he has assumed that position which he retained through life—a quiet respect for law, a conviction that social wrongs must be cured by constitutional means in a land

> Where Freedom broadens slowly down
> From precedent to precedent.

This poem, as well as the one on Freedom (3), were occasioned (says Mr. Aubrey de Vere) by some popular demonstrations connected with the Reform Bill and its rejection by the House of Lords.

4. In *Love thou thy land with love far-brought*, we see this point of view even more clearly; while acknowledging the sore need of changes,—and *Locksley Hall* shows that he was conscious of the suffering and strife of the age,—he devoutly hopes that they may come 'by still degrees', and not by thunder peal and violence. 'Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay' is still his dread.

5. Lastly, in *The Goose*, we have a political allegory, written at the time of the Reform Bill troubles. The old woman represents the poor and the working classes generally: the stranger is the Radical party, bringing in its programme of the 'Goose'. This programme, Free Trade and other measures, produces the eggs of apparent and temporary prosperity; but the disorder and social anarchy into which the country will ultimately be plunged is the heavy price paid for it.

GROUP D. PHILOSOPHICAL

We have here five poems, which may conveniently be considered together, on account of a certain similarity in the subject-matter and the questions involved. *Œnone* forms a suitable beginning, and it probably comes first in time. It was begun in the summer of 1830, when Arthur Hallam and Tennyson were in the Valley of Cauterets in the Pyrenees.

The scene is the judgement of Paris on Mount Ida, but Tennyson has spiritualized it into a picture of the choice offered to every human being; what shall be the End—the τέλος of life? Here

is the statement of the Problem of which the four other poems are the working out. What is Perfection, the τελείωσις[1] of man?

Three answers have always been ready.

1. Is it the gratification of the Body—the pleasures of sense? This, in its crudest form, is the answer of the Hedonist—'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die'.

2. Is it the culture of the Intellect, the fullness of mental development? This is the Aristotelian position:

> I take possession of men's mind and deed,
> I care not what the sects may brawl,
> I sit as God holding no form of creed
> But contemplating all.[2]

Or lastly,

3. Is it spiritual and moral perfection, the answer of the Idealist, that goodwill, spoken of by Kant the philosopher, which at last develops into a 'symmetrical passion for good'?

Rosy-fingered Aphrodite,—the splendour of Herè,—snow-cold Pallas,—stand as types of the three answers to this ever-present problem. Shall it be Laughter and Beauty, *or* Power, 'wisdom-bred, and throned of wisdom,' *or* the third, 'the full-grown will—a life of shocks, dangers, and deeds,' 'until pure Law comeasure perfect Freedom'?

Œnone is shadowed by the confusion and horror brought about by the choice of Paris. The other poems bring out these thoughts still further.

In the *Lotos-eaters* we shall hear again the seductive voice of Aphrodite, while the final results on the nature itself are vividly portrayed in *The Vision of Sin.*

In *The Palace of Art* there is a masterly picture of 'a soul rich in all things of the Mind.' Again we see Herè, with her 'proffer of royal power ample rule, unquestion'd', 'seeing men, in power

> Only are likest gods, who have attained
> Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
> Above the thunder, with undying bliss
> In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

In *Ulysses* there is something much more subtle. It has been said that in it Tennyson drew the portrait of his own mind, and when speaking to his son he said, 'It gave my feelings about the need of going forward and braving the struggle of life perhaps more simply than anything in *In Memoriam*'.

Here we must notice that it is undoubtedly the third answer to the problem, and is a working out of the words of Pallas Athene.

'*Ulysses*,' said Emerson, 'belongs to a high class of poetry, destined to be the highest, and to be more cultivated in the next generation.' It recalls words in one of Tennyson's letters:

[1] i.e. the attainment of full growth. [2] Palace of Art.

'Thro' darkness and storm and weariness of mind and body is there built a passage for His created ones to the Gates of Light.'

It was first published in 1842, and no alterations were made in it subsequently. It was probably written in 1833, soon after Arthur Hallam's death. It is not, as Mr. Churton Collins points out, 'the Ulysses of Homer, nor was it suggested by the *Odyssey*. The germ, the spirit, and the sentiment of the poem, are from the 26th Canto of Dante's *Inferno*, where Ulysses in the Limbo of the Deceivers speaks from the flame which swathes him.'

'Neither my fondness for my son, nor my aged sire's distress, nor the affection due which should have rejoiced Penelope's heart, availed to overpower within me my eagerness to win experience of the world, and of the virtues and vices of mankind; but I started on the expanse of the deep sea with a single vessel and with that small company which had not deserted me. . . . I and my companions were old and weary, when we reached the narrow strait where Hercules set up his boundary-marks. . . . "O brothers," I cried, "ye who through dangers innumerable have reached the West, grudge not to the too brief waking-time of our senses which still remains, to win, by following in the sun's wake, the knowledge of the uninhabited world. Bethink you of your origin; ye were not created to live the life of brutes, but to pursue virtue and intelligence." By this brief address I made my companions so eager for the voyage, that hardly after that could I have restrained them; and turning our stern toward the morn we sped our mad flight with oars for wings. . . . Already did the eye of night behold all the stars of the other pole and our pole so low that it rose not above the sea level.' (*Inferno*, Canto xxvi, 94–126. Tozer's Translation.)

Ulysses (Latin name for the Greek Odysseus) was King of Ithaca, a rocky island off the Corinthian gulf. He sailed for the Trojan War under Agamemnon; his sagacity in contriving the wooden horse led to the fall of Troy, and then, after many wanderings and an absence of thirty years, he succeeded in reaching home in safety, where he was welcomed by his faithful wife Penelope, and his son Telemachus. According to Homer he returned alone, all his companions having perished, but Tennyson, for dramatic purposes, has altered the story, and represents him as calling together the survivors of the old crew.

The first point to notice is the nature-painting. Something has been said in the Introduction about Tennyson's invented landscape; here, without any direct description, we are made conscious of the surroundings by almost dramatic touches.[1] The barren crags of rugged Ithaca stand out against the glow of the sunset, the lights begin to twinkle from the rocks, 'there gloom the

[1] The poem should be compared with the ghost scene in *Hamlet* and the witches in *Macbeth*, where a sympathetic nature background is created simply by the allusions in the speeches.

dark broad seas.' The moon slowly rises, the stars shine out, and even the sound of the verse recalls the deep moan of the waters. Then against this symbolic background, full of the mystery and the wistfulness of evening, there stands out the figure of Ulysses.

All is in harmony—the waning day, the ship in port, the aged king, with the indomitable spirit straining out into a wider life. The glow in the west beckons, the sails are rounded by the wind; and the man is restless to be gone. After a few lines of introduction the poem brings before us the Past; lines 21 to 43 contain the present contrast between Ulysses and his son; from 43 to the end we see the Future.

As Mr. Stopford Brooke says, 'the dominant interest here . . . is the human interest—the soul that cannot rest, whom the unknown always allures to action, the image of the exact opposite of the temper of mind of the Lotos-eaters'. The Past is briefly expressed in the words of Pallas: it had been indeed a life of 'shocks, dangers, and deeds', a vast and rich experience which had become part of the soul, 'the arch wherethro' gleamed the untravell'd world'. The thought is psychologically true; the richer the mind, the greater its capacity for further reception,[1] the nobler the spirit, the more it

> Welcomes each rebuff
> That makes earth's smoothness rough,
> Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand, but go.[2]

It may be compared with Tennyson's picture of Virtue:

> She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
> To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky,
> Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

PART II

GROUP A. NATURE-PAINTING

Much has already been said about Tennyson's deep love for Nature.[3] The first of the poems in this small group,

1. *The Eagle*, is an excellent example of his power to catch the essentials of a landscape, and delineate them in a few vivid words: the famous line 'The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls' has often been noticed, with its peculiar aptness to describe a wind-swept sea, seen from a great height.

2. In *The Brook* some new and remarkable points come out. The scene is a homely one, by the babbling brook near Philip's Farm: the time, a summer afternoon. The music of the running

[1] This is a common thought in German philosophy. Knowledge is power in the deepest sense, inasmuch as it involves the capacity for further progress.

[2] *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, Browning.

[3] See Introduction, p. xii.

water seems to ring through the metre. A man 'with tonsured head in middle age forlorn' sits musing on the stile. He is a wanderer come back from foreign lands, but not to home; the thought at once shadows the pleasant scene, and as he muses, memory paints her pictures of the dead and the lost; of the gifted young brother, who had sung of this very brook,—of garrulous old Philip,—of blue-eyed Katie and the innocent plot to gain time and make up a lover's quarrel. It is a pretty picture made up of sunny fields, white, like the surf, with meadow-sweet, and English woods full of shy wild things, where 'in copse and fern'

Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.

The ripple of the brook still sounds in our ears, and nature is just as beautiful as she was twenty years ago; but the *man* has aged, and the *dead* are otherwhere. Thus by a subtle change we feel the sadness of it all. Even Philip's tongue is silent now,—we spend our years 'as a tale that is told', and nature heeds us not. Then at the last Tennyson breaks into the sorrowful reverie with the thought of reunion after many days,—and Lawrence Aylmer finds the friends of his youth and is comforted. Such is the poem, showing the poet's curious power of throwing over the scene the glamour of *remembered* beauty, while the sounds of Nature, here the ceaseless cadence of the brook, suggest philosophical truth.

For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

The Daisy was written in Edinburgh in 1853. Tennyson had left his wife and their infant son at Richmond, whilst he went further to the 'Gray Metropolis of the North'.

The poem is an account of a journey in the July of 1851. He and his wife had started from Boulogne, and, though they were prevented from visiting Rome or Venice, they greatly enjoyed the evening drives over the mountains, 'the glorious violet colouring of the Apennines and the picturesqueness of the peasants beating out their flax or spinning with their distaffs at their cottage doors.' The metre should specially be noticed. Tennyson ranked it as one of the best among the many he had invented, and called it a far-off echo of the Horatian Alcaic.[1]

GROUP B. A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

Mr. Churton Collins places *Locksley Hall* among the studies of Passion. Tennyson himself says it is 'a dramatic impersonation.... There is not one touch of biography in it from beginning to end.... Locksley Hall is an entirely imaginative edifice.'[2]

[1] Alcaeus was a Lyric poet of Mytilene who invented a kind of verse called after him the *Alcaic*.

[2] Letter to Charles Esmarch. *Life*, by Lord Tennyson, p. 695.

It is curious to note that more than one person expressed bitter resentment at the poet for having put into verse their own private experience of faithless ladies, and another critic calmly stated that it was the story of Tennyson's own past. In a somewhat quaint letter written in 1888, when *Locksley Hall sixty years after* had appeared, he protests against this last view, saying, that he never had a cousin Amy, that his grandchildren were little boys, and that he was not even white-headed! Lord Tennyson says that his father dedicated this later poem to his wife, because he thought the two poems were likely to be in the future two of the most historically interesting of his works, as descriptive of the tone of the age at two distant periods of his life.[1]

Certain points worthy of special notice are—

1. Its form. A dramatic impersonation differs from a drama inasmuch as the speeches and actions of the other characters can only be imagined from their effects on the one who tells the story. All is steeped in one personality, and that must necessarily be to some extent that of the author, or at least that of one definite, consistent creation of the author's mind.

2. The picture is essentially one of youth; youth in its brilliant beginning, in its passionate attachments, and sanguine temperament; youth in the extreme bitterness of its disillusion, its exaggeration of wrongs, its strong tendencies to action—action which we know by instinct will infallibly assuage at last the dull throb of pain. One beautiful simile has already been alluded to.[2] Another hardly less remarkable follows—

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Thirdly, we notice that the attitude here towards the power of wealth, the strenuous competition, nay, even the ordinary bonds of society, is almost one of revolt; but it must also be remembered that Tennyson has put these views into the mouth of a youth whose mind is almost unhinged by disappointment.

GROUP C. LOVE POEMS

1. *The Sisters* was first published in 1833, and attracted a good deal of attention. Fanny Kemble set the ballad to music, but she was on the whole inclined to think it too painful, and to wish such things should not be written.

2. The idyll of *The Gardener's Daughter* is another picture of youthful love. It is peculiarly rich in colouring, because

[1] See *Life*, by Lord Tennyson, p. 693.
[2] See Introduction, p. xiv.

as Tennyson says, 'the lover is an artist'; immense care was bestowed on the central figure of the girl standing among the roses. The poem also shows Tennyson's sympathy with simple ordinary life. The close throws a peculiar glamour of sadness over the whole. We suddenly realize that we have been standing before a sacred veiled picture: the idol of youth is now only the blessed memory of old age. The present Lord Tennyson mentions an unpublished poem of his father's called *The Ante-Chamber*, and intended as a Prologue to *The Gardener's Daughter*. It is a description of Eustace, the Artist's friend. The closing lines are surely of more than ordinary interest, coming from the author of *In Memoriam*:

> I . . . bless
> The All-perfect Framer, Him who made the heart
> Forethinking its twinfold necessity
> Thro' one whole life an overflowing urn
> Capacious both of Friendship and of Love.

Tennyson's ideal of these two powerful factors in life inspired his finest poetry. It is the complete failure of both which makes the darkest tragedy of the *Arthur* Epic:

> All whereon I lean'd in wife and friend
> Is traitor to my peace . . .
> 'My God, thou hast forgotten me in my death.'

3. Tennyson is said to have told a friend that *The Talking Oak* was an experiment meant to test the degree in which it is within the power of poetry to humanize external nature. In one of his letters to Miss Sellwood occurs an interesting passage throwing light on his own feeling about nature. 'Dim and mystic sympathies with tree and hill reach far back into childhood. A known landscape is to me an old friend, that continually talks to me of my own youth, and half-forgotten things, and indeed does more for me than many an old friend that I know. An old park is my delight.' [1]

The enthusiasm of the oak for the maiden almost recalls the Euphuistic fashion of ascribing life and feeling to inanimate nature. M. Jusserand quotes some choice examples from Sir Philip Sidney, e.g. 'In his Arcady the valleys are consoled for their lowness by the silver streams which wind in the midst of them: the ripples of the Ladon struggle with one another to reach the place where Philoclea is bathing, but those which surround her refuse to give up their fortunate position. A shepherdess embarks: "Did you not mark how the winds whistled and the seas danced for joy; how the sails did swell with pride and all because they had Urania?"' [2]

[1] *Life of Tennyson*, p. 144.
[2] *English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare*, Jusserand.

Emerson says that *The Talking Oak* is beautiful and the most poetic of the volume of 1842, although it is a little spoilt by its wit and ingenuity.

4. In *Love and Duty* we have a much more serious psychological study. Whether there is anything autobiographical about the poem is not a matter which need concern us. The position is sufficiently clear, sufficiently common: the problem indeed is that of the *Idylls of the King* in another form. Intense love between man and woman, quite innocent in its beginning, and then the sudden revelation that duty points to separation and not union. What is to be the sequel? Is suffering to end in the death of Love? Even evil things work out to good, can this greatest, 'this wonder', end in dust and a ruined life? Surely not, for it has already quickened and ennobled the souls of both. Then if good results from ill, why not give way, and follow Love, as Lancelot did? Nay,—it is Tennyson's own voice which we hear, —that were treason. Love at its highest and noblest is Duty.

> The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
> The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
> Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
> Enough that He heard it once: we shall hear it by and by.[1]

And so they bid adieu for ever. It is the man who speaks, and perhaps that is the reason why Love in him seems to reach its fullest Beauty. So completely is self effaced, that he would shield her even from the shadow of his own pain, and with quiet eyes, unfaithful to the truth, he 'points her forward to a distant light'. Truly, to such 'Love is all and death is nought'.

5. *The Day-dream* was first published in 1842, but *The Sleeping Beauty* had appeared among the poems of 1830. The prologue and apologue were added after 1832. Mr. Churton Collins quotes Tennyson's own words as the best commentary on it, 'Poetry is like shot-silk with many glancing colours. Every reader must find his own interpretation according to his ability, and according to his sympathy with the poet.' Two thoughts may be noticed among the many which this beautiful poem suggests. First, that an ideal Love is a revelation in a life, and has power to raise man or woman to a mental and moral activity to which their previous existence was even as a sleep. That care and pain, nay, even danger and failure may come with it, the poet grants, but in a stanza of extraordinary beauty he pictures the journey into the unknown land, that 'new world which is the old'

> Across the hills and far away
> Beyond their utmost purple rim
> And deep into the dying day.

It is significant that at last the girl follows her lover 'beyond the night'.

[1] Browning, *Abt Vogler*.

Such a love as this entered into the life of Elizabeth Barrett, and its result was the concentrated beauty of the 'Sonnets from the Portuguese'. Such a love came into the soul of the boy Dante, though its full fruition was not for him, until he saw Beatrice in her 'second beauty' beyond the shadow of this world.

Second, is there not a suggestion in this poem of another awakening of which even human love at its highest is but the type,—Psyche led by Eros up the heights as it is symbolized in Watts's great picture, or as Tennyson paints it here, the soul roused from lethargy by the touch of the Ideal, to leave the sleeping and the dead of a lower life, and to follow her Prince to the greater wonders of his father's Court?

6. *Come not when I am dead.* This uncommon and powerful little poem appeared in *The Keepsake*, 1851. The sadness of loss of faith, of disillusion which is worse than death, has ended in utter weariness of both love and life.

7 and 8. The last poems in this group require but little comment: the first, *Move eastward, happy Earth*, was published in 1842; the second, *The Letters*, is simply the tale of a lovers' quarrel.

GROUP D. POEMS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To J. S. In February, 1828, Alfred and Charles Tennyson matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and there the brothers became the centre of a genial, high-spirited, poetical set, young men who were destined to become famous in many walks in life. Amongst them was James Spedding (author of the *Life of Bacon*), of whom Tennyson wrote in later years: 'He was the Pope among us young men—the wisest man I know.'[1] He continued one of the poet's most intimate friends until his death in 1881. This beautiful poem was written to him on the death of his brother Edward, and was first published in 1833.

2. The Sonnet *As when with downcast eyes* first appeared in 1833, but was suppressed and not published again until 1872. It is a poem to an unknown friend dealing with the curious fact, that when a warm friendship is formed there is often the feeling of having met and sympathized before in some previous state of existence. It is not altogether to be accounted for except on some theory of subconscious modifications or unknown laws of telepathy.

3. *To——, after reading a Life and Letters.* One would naturally suppose that the book referred to was Monckton Milnes's *Letters and Literary Remains of Keats*, which had been published in

[1] *Life of Tennyson*, p. 32.

the previous year (1848). But Tennyson was unwilling that the public should think so. This horror of publicity, vulgar criticism, and the intrusions of the interviewer, remained with Tennyson all his life. In a letter to Mr. Gladstone, dated December, 1883, we find this postscript, which throws a quaint light on his views: 'I heard of an old lady the other day to whom all the great men of her time had written. When Froude's *Carlyle* came out, she rushed up to her room, and to an old chest there wherein she kept their letters, and flung them into the fire. "They were written to me," she said, "not to the public," and she set her chimney on fire, and her children and grandchildren ran in. "The chimney's on fire!" "Never mind!" she said, and went on burning. I should like to raise an altar to that old lady, and burn incense upon it.'[1] The person to whom the poem is addressed cannot be identified with any certainty. Tennyson's brother Charles has been suggested, and the allusions seem appropriate to his life and character, but it is more probably some imaginary person.

4. *To E. L., on his Travels in Greece.* Edward Lear, the landscape painter, to whom this poem is addressed, was a life-long friend of Tennyson's. The accounts of his travels in his Journal are remarkably graphic. But he is best known as the author of the 'Nonsense Books'.

5. *A Farewell.* In 1837 the Tennysons were obliged to leave Somersby, the little hamlet on the Lincolnshire wold where the great poet was born, and which had been his home for so many years. The Rectory, with its lawn and old-fashioned garden, its many flowers, and above all, its swift steep-banked brook, inspired some of the very best of his early Nature poetry. This brook is also described in the *Ode to Memory*, and is referred to more than once in *In Memoriam*.

6. *Break, break, break.* This poem was composed in 'a Lincolnshire lane at five o'clock in the morning between blossoming hedges'. It was not published until 1842, but it undoubtedly refers to the great sorrow of Tennyson's life, the death of his friend. The scenery is that of Clevedon Church, 'obscure and solitary' on the heights above the Bristol Channel. 'From the graveyard you can hear the music of the tide as it washes against the low cliffs not a hundred yards away.'[2] In the vault below the manor aisle of this church rests all that is mortal of Arthur Henry Hallam.

> There twice a day the Severn fills:
> The salt sea-water passes by,
> And hushes half the babbling Wye
> And makes a silence in the hills.

[1] *Life of Tennyson*, p. 670.
[2] Ibid., p. 247.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,
And hush'd my deepest grief of all
When fill'd with tears that cannot fall,
I brim with sorrow drowning song.[1]

7 and 8. *The Poet's Song* and *Afterthought* are autobiographical in the sense that they show on the one hand Tennyson's lofty conception of the poet's mission to the world, and on the other the temptation of the poetasters to cavil at others, and to bow weakly to a false criticism.

9. *Sonnet to W. C. Macready.* Tennyson was intimate with Mr. Macready, the actor, during his Cheltenham days in 1847, when he used to make frequent expeditions to London to see his friends. He did not approve of Macready as 'Hamlet', but liked him as 'Macbeth'. This Sonnet was addressed to him on leaving the stage in 1851.

10. *To the Rev. F. D. Maurice.* Among the brilliant members of the Tennyson set at Cambridge in 1830, there was a society called the Apostles, the originator of which was Frederick Maurice. Arthur Hallam writes of him: 'The effect which he has produced on the minds of many at Cambridge by the single creation of that Society of "Apostles" (for the spirit though not the form was created by him) is far greater than I can dare to calculate, and will be felt, both directly and indirectly, in the age that is upon us.'[2] It was Maurice that Tennyson asked to be godfather to his son Hallam, and when the *Theological Essays*[3] came out in 1858 they were dedicated to the poet. The latter believed that if Maurice's doctrine had been somewhat more within ordinary comprehension, he would have taken his place as foremost thinker among the churchmen of our age.

GROUP E. SPECULATIVE AND THEOLOGICAL

This little group has many things in common with the philosophical and classical poems of Part I. *The Two Voices.*(2) was begun as early as 1833. 'When I wrote it,' said Tennyson, 'I was so utterly miserable, a burden to myself and to my family, that I said, "Is life worth anything?"' Sooner or later nearly all thoughtful people pass through an experience of this sort—a valley of the Shadow of Death—a place where, as Bunyan says, we are hard put to it on account of the fiends' voices in our ears, which we can scarcely distinguish from our own. It is a place of obstinate questionings, where we struggle with such

[1] *In Memoriam.* [2] *Life of Tennyson*, p. 36.
[3] By F. Maurice.

problems as the waste and pain in this Universe, and the indifference of Nature to our sufferings. Why do the elements, servile ministers, join their high-engender'd battles 'gainst the infirm and old?[1]

> Better be with the dead
>
> Than on the torture of the mind to lie
> In restless ecstasy.[2]

We hear again Hamlet's weary longings for that 'undiscovered country', or the even more seductive tones of Despair,

> Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas,
> Ease after warre, death after life does greatly please.[3]

The final answer given by Tennyson is only an echo of Spenser and the great writers of earlier times. As the sentinel cannot leave his post till the sound of the morning watch, so the later poet's thoughts travel back to the heroes of old,

> Who rowing hard against the stream
> Saw distant gates of Eden gleam
> And did not dream it was a dream.

The poem ends with the peace of the Sabbath morning, and the message of hope. It is better to live on.

> Whatever crazy sorrow saith
> No life that breathes with human breath
> Has ever truly long'd for death.

The next two poems, *St. Agnes' Eve* (3) and *St. Simeon Stylites* (1), take up from different points of view another great problem, viz. Asceticism. *St. Agnes' Eve* was first published in 1837, in *The Keepsake*. In the reign of Diocletian a young girl of thirteen is said to have suffered martyrdom; she it is whom Tennyson has taken as his St. Agnes, a spirit of unearthly purity, the companion picture to the Nun in *The Holy Grail*, or possibly even to Sir Galahad himself. In the later poems we see more clearly what Tennyson's view was of even this most attractive form of asceticism. Galahad's career was short, and Arthur says expressly,

> And one hath had the vision face to face,
> And now his chair desires him here in vain
> However they may crown him otherwhere.

The poem[4] goes on to hint in somewhat mysterious language that in the King himself, patient, duty loving, doing his work in the world, we shall find the Ideal, and not in any cloistered

[1] *King Lear*, III. ii.
[2] *Macbeth*, III. ii.
[3] *Faerie Queene*, I. ix. 40.
[4] *The Holy Grail*.

saint. To him *daily* come the visions of the unseen, and the consciousness of immortality, and when at last he passes to the Isles of Avilion, Bedivere hears in the distance a great cry,

> Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
> Around a king returning from his wars.

In *St. Simeon Stylites* (1), we see the pride of Asceticism at its basest. The strange assumption of abject humility mingled with the sense of having merited a right to a high place, the clutching at the crown, with the ever-present dread that at the last moment it may elude him, make St. Simeon a curious and complicated study; we feel that whatever saintship may mean, nothing so entirely self-centred can possibly be meritorious, and we pity the deluded sufferer more than we despise him.

Finally in this group we place the little poem, *Will* (4). Character is a completely fashioned will. Will, it has been said, is desire, when there is present with it a belief in the possibility of attainment, and it is tentative action which generates it out of mere desire. Thus will grows weaker through acted crime, or stronger through noble deeds. If really strong, neither suffering nor calamity can force it. This then is Tennyson's own answer to the problem he has suggested. It is will which makes saintship; a will fixed on duty, no matter what the environment or the apparent disaster may be.

Launcelot saw the beauty of this ideal. He was essentially noble by nature; he could not sin and grow sleek; his mood was often like a fiend, and even Arthur noted the 'homeless trouble in his eyes'. In his agony he longed to break the shameful bonds, and he even went on the Quest of the Grail. He did all but the *one* thing; he never *willed* to give up his sin, and so all was in vain. Arthur went on no quest, and everything earthly failed him, but he *willed* righteousness and, strange as it may seem, we are conscious that even in that last dim battle of the west, he conquered and passed to his throne.

PART III

GROUP A. EARLY SKETCHES FOR THE 'IDYLLS OF THE KING'

In this group we are introduced to the five most remarkable characters in the *Idylls of the King*.

1. *The Lady of Shalott* may have been written as early as May, 1832.[1] There is an Italian romance called the *Donna di Scalotta*, which tells the story of Elaine's love and death, and

[1] Fitzgerald mentions its being read to him at Cambridge.

Shalott is a form (through the French) of Astolat. The meaning has occasioned much discussion. Tennyson has curiously altered the story to suit his own purpose; in speaking to Canon Ainger he said: 'The new-born love for something, for some one in the wide world from which she has been so long secluded, takes her out of the region of shadows into that of realities.' But this can hardly be said to fully explain the matter. Most of the commentators give up the puzzle and look upon the poem as brilliant fancy with no special meaning. They regard it as growing quite simply in the mind of Tennyson by the association of ideas. May we not, however, see some connexion in thought between this and the fully developed Idyll? Is there not something shadowy even in the love of Elaine for Lancelot? It has been suggested that none of Tennyson's women are wholly satisfactory. One of Shakespeare's most remarkable characteristics is the power to paint strong and yet attractive women, women who, like Portia, can save the situation when men are despairing, or who, like Volumnia, may deliver their country. None of Tennyson's women are quite of this type, and Elaine, lovable as she is, seems almost the opposite. At the touch of disaster the nature gives way, and cannot even adjust itself to the old environment. Affection for father and brother, the needs of the lonely home, cannot keep her, and so she fades out of life with the song upon her lips about Love and Death,

'And sweet is death who puts an end to pain.'

Tennyson's heroic *men* must stay at the post of duty, however bitter life may be, and so must Shakespeare's noblest *women*. Here the poet seems to picture a love with less breadth and strength, since it has less to do with the intellectual life: the girl has lived in fantasy, so when the great blow comes, there is nothing else to turn to. Life is quite empty, and she dies. The present Lord Tennyson writes thus: 'The key to this tale of magic symbolism is of deep human significance, and is to be found in the lines

> Or when the moon was overhead
> Came two young lovers lately wed;
> "I am half sick of shadows" said
> The Lady of Shalott.'

The poem was very much altered and improved in the later edition of 1842. Mr. Spedding in the *Edinburgh* writes of it: 'The lady of Shalott is stripped of all her finery, her pearl garland, her velvet bed, her royal apparel, and her "blinding diamond bright", are all gone; and certainly in the simple white robe which she now wears, her beauty shows to much greater advantage.'

2. *Sir Galahad.* This beautiful poem was published in 1842,

and no alterations were subsequently made in it. It forms a prelude to one of the finest of all the Idylls, *The Holy Grail*. The story has its origin in remote antiquity. From a Celtic legend with distinctly heathen colouring it became associated with Joseph of Arimathæa and the Grail or dish used at the Last Supper. This sacred vessel, afterwards connected with the Crucifixion, was kept at Glastonbury, but as the times waxed evil the holy cup disappeared. Then it seemed to come in vision to the pure in heart. Percival's sister, the holy nun, saw it, and it was she who recognized a kindred spirit in the boy-knight Galahad: she bound on him the sword-belt woven from her own bright hair, she bade him go forth as her knight to break through all;

> She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
> Thro' him, and made him hers and laid her mind
> On him, and he believed in her belief.

Tennyson was no doubt attracted by the artistic beauty of this subject, but it must not be forgotten, that when the Grail had passed hidden through the great Hall, and when so many of the knights had taken the vow to seek it for a twelvemonth and a day, King Arthur did not express approval. He even saw in it 'a sign to maim the order' of the great round Table, giving as his reason that for most men the life of unselfish work for others was the way to holiness, and that if they missed that, it would end in following wandering fires, lost in the quagmire.

3. *Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere.* In the *Idylls of the King* we pass slowly through the seasons of the year, and thus we have a sympathetic Nature background for human passion. In this fragment, *Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere*, it is the joyous springtime. When the victorious Arthur had swept back the heathen and won his bride, he sent his best loved knight to fetch her.

> And Lancelot pass'd away among the flowers,
> (For then was latter April,) and return'd
> Among the flowers, in May, with Guinevere.[1]

It was late spring when the young Gareth won his spurs. Camelot in the silver misty morn, flashing in the early sunlight, was still a mystic city of pure women and brave men. In *Geraint and Enid* it is early summer, close upon Whitsuntide, but there are shadows beginning to mar the brightness, the suspicion that all is not right in the Palace. When we come to *The Holy Grail*, the gloom is deepening; the time is still late summer, but the air is heavy with thunder, and ill tidings had reached even the cell of the pure nun.

[1] *Coming of Arthur.*

In *The Last Tournament* it is indeed autumn; the sere and yellow leaf, the wet moaning wind, the muttering storm, are only in sympathy with Lancelot, sitting dispirited in Arthur's seat, his mind full of foreboding. Thus we are prepared for the Great Idyll with which this group closes.

4. *The Epic. Morte d'Arthur.* This magnificent poem was written as early as 1835; it appeared in the volume of 1842, and was never subsequently altered. 'The vision of Arthur as I have drawn him,' said Tennyson, 'had come upon me when, little more than a boy, I first lighted upon Malory.'

The *Morte d'Arthur* follows very closely the third, fourth, and fifth chapters of the Romance. The first point we would notice is the Nature background. Autumn has passed into winter. When the king had 'left one lying in the dust at Almesbury', the death-white mist had shrouded the world; but now a bitter wind, clear from the north, has blown the fog aside, and the wan waves are rolling in over the field of battle, covering the faces of the dead. One figure stands out sharp and clear—that of the arch-traitor. Then Arthur smites with Excalibur for the last time, and Modred falls in shameful fight with his king. At this point the earlier poem opens, and the scene is extraordinarily vivid. We see bare black cliffs, a ruined chapel on a dark strait of barren land, a broken cross;

> On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
> Lay a great water and the moon was full.

The air is clear and icy cold. We cannot help asking, what does it all mean? Tennyson himself explained the main drift. 'The whole is the dream of man coming into practical life, and ruined by one sin. Birth is a mystery, and death is a mystery, and in the midst lies the tableland of life, and its struggles and performances. It is not the history of one man or of one generation, but of a whole cycle of generations.' But this last scene rouses a thousand questions. Arthur is obviously the ideal man. Even the chronicler Joseph of Exeter writes: 'The old world knows not his peer, nor will the future show us his equal.' Mr. Gladstone, commenting on the *Idylls*, says: 'We know not where to look in history or in letters for a nobler or more overpowering conception of man as he might be than in the Arthur of this volume. Whenever he appears, it is as the great pillar of the moral order, and the resplendent top of human excellence.' [1]

But if this be so, why the deep gloom of this closing scene? His life-work seems wrecked. 'The sequel of to-day unsolders all,' 'My realm reels back into the beast, and is no more.' And it has been pointed out that these mournful words seem true. Not only had wife and friend failed, but also knight after knight

[1] *Life of Tennyson*, p. 526.

had broken his vows, and in *The Last Tournament* there is a ghastly picture of mockery and the weariness of all restraint. So much is this so that one writer concludes that Guinevere is right, and that there is fault in the blameless king, that he had perhaps striven to impress his own personality too much upon his followers—that he lacks colour and warmth, and is a little too good for Nature's daily food. Yet all will agree that in this last scene Arthur himself is intensely human, human both in his immeasurable suffering, and in his appeal for sympathy to the only friend left. May we not suggest another explanation, viz. that this complete disaster comes just *because* he stands out as one of the noblest of mankind? There is one cup more bitter even than torture, and none but the peers of the universe taste it; its chief ingredients are two, failure and desertion. Both must be real to the sufferer, even up to the moment when the cloud of death overshadows him. Only to the onlookers the light breaks through; they hear the shout of victory, for them the veil is lifted. So it seems to us it was with Arthur. The dense white mist, the hideous confusion, was the last, the hardest trial; that once over, with honour unstained like the heroes of old,[1] he gives back his sword into the hands of the spiritual being whence it came. Calmly, and with infinite majesty, King Arthur, weary but surely triumphant, rests on the dusky barge, and is borne out over the great Deep to the Islands of the Blest.

GROUP B. POEMS OF MODERN LIFE

The poems in this group have this in common that they deal with some phase or problem of modern life, and that in language and, above all, in tone, they represent either the English village of to-day, as in *Dora*, or the ordinary talk of Englishmen on some social question, as in *Audley Court*, *Walking to the Mail*, *Edwin Morris*, and *The Golden Year*; or some aspects of literary life, as in *Amphion* and *Will Waterproof*.

1. *Dora* is taken from one of Miss Mitford's stories, 'The Tale of Dora Creswell' (*Our Village*, vol. iii, pp. 242–53); Tennyson has followed his original very closely, only altering the surname from Creswell to Morrison. The poem is remarkable for the extreme simplicity and yet exquisite finish of the style. Some critics consider it almost too concise for the subject, since real life of this kind goes at a slow meandering pace, and the pauses seem many. The men and women of this class talk much more after the pattern of garrulous Philip in *The Brook* than in

[1] Compare the end of Roland and the giving up of the great sword to the Angel Gabriel.

the clear-cut forceful phrases of Old Allan. Still the figures are very human, and if Tennyson has idealized the language in which they express strong emotion, it is but a poet's licence.

2. *Audley Court* was first published in 1842. Lord Tennyson gives the following note on it written by his father:[1] 'This poem was partially suggested by Abbey Park at Torquay. Torquay was in old days the loveliest sea village in England and now is a town. In those old days, I, coming down from the hill over Torquay, saw a star of phosphorescence made by the buoy appearing and disappearing in the dark sea.' This sight inspired the lines with which the poem closes:

> lower down
> The bay was oily-calm; the harbour buoy,
> Sole star of phosphorescence in the calm,
> With one green sparkle ever and anon
> Dipt by itself, and we were glad at heart.

3. *Walking to the Mail* and *Edwin Morris* are, it has been said, 'full of that honest University humour which characterizes the talk of Englishmen when they are on a vacation tour.' In the former occurs the curious bit of Lincolnshire folklore, of how the family ghost, packed among the beds, proposed to accompany the farmer, who was leaving his house to avoid its visitations. The worthy man hearing the familiar voice exclaims:

> You, flitting with us too?—
> Jack, turn the horses' heads and home again.

4. *Edwin Morris; or, The Lake*, first appeared in the seventh edition of the poems in 1851. There is a special interest attaching to it, because it contains references to the subject which was much in Tennyson's mind four years before, viz. the woman question, a subject which he dealt with so fully in *The Princess*. The fat-faced curate Edward Bull has somewhat mundane views of woman's destiny, which are very distasteful to the poet Edwin Morris. The teller of the story speaks rashly of the 'wayward modern mind dissecting passion' and subsequently learns more about the subject by a bitter experience.

5. *The Golden Year* was first published in 1846, and many of the thoughts contained in it were suggested by the difficulties of the time. Party spirit ran very high on the Corn Bill and the Coercion Bill. The struggle between Free Trade and Protection was raging, and the gravest problems concerning religion and education were coming to the front. It seemed very far indeed from a day when 'all men's good' should be 'each man's rule'. The rugged old James's practical common sense breaks in upon the poet's dream. The times may be difficult, but the panacea

[1] *Life of Tennyson*, p. 163.

is not to be found in idly thinking of a golden year in the dim future: the best remedy is steady work,—devotion to ordinary duty; to such

> This same grand year is ever at the doors.

We recall the striking words of Arthur in *The Holy Grail*. The king himself is but as the hind,

> To whom a space of land is given to plow
> Who may not wander from the allotted field
> Before his work is done.

6. *Amphion* is a humorous allegory in which Tennyson laments that his age can so little appreciate poetry. Mr. Churton Collins remarks that Amphion was no doubt capable of performing all the feats here attributed to him, but there is no record of them: he appears to have confined himself to charming the stones into their places when Thebes was being built. Tennyson seems to have confounded him with Orpheus.

7. *Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue. Made at the Cock.* About the year 1842 Tennyson was often in London, staying at the Temple, or Lincoln's Inn Fields. It was then that he used to dine with his friends at the Cock Tavern, No. 201 Fleet Street; this was a noted inn in the days of Pepys, who speaks of having been 'mighty merry there April 23rd. 1668'. In Tennyson's day it was the resort of many literary people. Edward Fitz-Gerald tells us[1] 'The plump head-waiter of the "Cock" by Temple Bar, famous for chops and porter, was rather offended when told of this poem. Had Mr. Tennyson dined oftener there, he would not have minded it so much, he said.' The Cock ceased to exist as an inn on April 10, 1886. Mr. Churton Collins also quotes a description of it from *Notes and Queries*, seventh series, vol. i, pp. 442–6: 'At the end of a long room beyond the skylight, which, except for a feeble side window, was its only light in the day time, was a door that led past a small lavatory and up half a dozen narrow steps to the kitchen, one of the strangest and grimmest old kitchens you ever saw. Across a mighty hatch, thronged with dishes, you looked into it and beheld there the white-jacketed man-cook, served by his two robust and red-armed kitchenmaids. For you they were preparing chops, pork chops in winter, lamb chops in spring, mutton chops always, and steaks and sausages, and kidneys and potatoes, and poached eggs and Welsh rabbits, and stewed cheese, the special glory of the house. That was the *menu*, and men were the only guests. But of late years, as innovations often precede a catastrophe, two new things were introduced, vegetables and women. Both were respectable and both were good, but it was felt, especially by the virtuous Smurthwaite, that they were *de trop* in a place so masculine and so carnivorous.'

[1] *Life of Tennyson*, p. 154.

GROUP C. BALLAD POETRY

A ballad has been defined as a popular song, narrative or sentimental, in simple homely verse. The word is from the French *ballade*, a dancing song (It. *ballare*, to dance). The themes of romantic ballads are very ancient. The beggar maid who weds the royal lover, the poor child substituted for the dead babe in the noble house, the simple village maiden who wins the heart of the Lord of the Castle—all are stock subjects for this kind of poetry. The characteristics of a good ballad are picturesqueness, simplicity, felicitous choice of expression, fire and speed.[1]

1. *Godiva* is in blank verse and not in ballad form at all. It is included here merely on account of the nature of the subject and the simplicity and force of the diction. It is a poem founded on a legend first told by Matthew of Westminster, who wrote in 1307. He mentions a certain Earl Leofric, Lord of Coventry, who lived in the reign of Edward the Confessor, and who imposed this severe test on his noble wife Godiva. The Godiva pageant takes place in Coventry at the fair on Friday in Trinity week.

2. *Edward Gray* is the old tale, told with considerable force and passion, of a lover's misunderstanding and death. The fanciful nature of the last three verses is rather a falling off from the vigour of the beginning.

3. *Lady Clare* is taken from Miss Ferrier's novel *Inheritance*. Tennyson has very much simplified the complications in the story, but has followed little details of words and descriptions closely.

4. *The Lord of Burleigh*. At Burleigh House, the magnificent mansion of the Marquis of Exeter, visitors are still shown the portrait of a certain Lady Burleigh who died in January, 1797, at the age of twenty-four, 'to the inexpressible surprise and concern of all acquainted with her.' Henry Cecil, nephew and heir to the ninth Earl of Exeter, was staying at a little village in Shropshire when he met Sarah Hoggins, the heroine of this poem. He married her, and two years afterwards succeeded to the title and estates, but the story adds that she could not bear the unaccustomed pomp and state of her position, and she died 'sinking under the burden of an honour unto which she was not born'.

5. *The Beggar Maid* was probably suggested by the sixth ballad in the first series of the *Percy Reliques*, Book ii.

6. *The Captain*. Another example in the same style.

[1] See A. Lang in Ward's *English Poets*, vol. i, p. 204.

GROUP D. PATRIOTIC POEMS

Tennyson had always shown the keenest interest not only in English life at home, but also in that same life abroad. 'In 1852,' writes Lord Tennyson, 'my father along with many others regarded France under Napoleon as a serious menace to the peace of Europe. Although a passionate patriot, and a true lover of England, he was not blind to her faults, and was unprejudiced and cosmopolitan in seeing the best side of other nations; and in later years, after the Franco-German War, he was filled with admiration at the dignified way in which France was gradually gathering herself together. He rejoiced whenever England and France were in agreement, and worked together harmoniously for the good of the world.' [1]

1. *Hands all round* was published in the newspapers in 1852 and refers to the French menace. Landor, writing to John Forster, says of it that it is incomparably the best (convivial) lyric in the language.

2. *The Third of February.* On December 2nd, 1851, Prince Louis Napoleon, a nephew of the great emperor, had accomplished his amazing *Coup d'État* in Paris. He had for some time previously been supporting the Republic, and had managed so successfully as to get himself elected President. Then, having won over the army, he proceeded to overthrow the Government and make himself master of France. The deed was accomplished with ruthless violence, and a thrill of indignation passed through England at the news. Lord Palmerston, however, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, without any authority for his action, spoke approvingly of the *Coup d'État* to the French ambassador in London. He was, in consequence, obliged to resign office, and when Parliament met on *the 3rd of February*, 1852, the keenest anxiety was felt to know the reason of this sudden dismissal. Lord John Russell, in a very successful speech, explained the action of the Government, and the speech of Lord Palmerston, which followed, quite failed to offer any adequate explanation of his conduct. Tennyson's indignant protest only voices the feeling of the Queen and the English nation on this subject.

3. *The Charge of the Light Brigade.* On October 25, 1854, the Russians made a desperate attack on the lines of the allied armies in the hope of gaining possession of Balaklava. Justin McCarthy gives the following account of the incident: [2] 'The attack was bold and brilliant but it was splendidly repulsed. Never did a day of battle do more credit to English courage,

[1] *Life of Tennyson*, p. 287.
[2] *History of our own Times*, ch. xi, p. 68.

or less perhaps to English generalship. . . . It will be memorable in all English history as the battle in which occurred the famous charge of the Light Brigade. Owing to some fatal misconception of the meaning of an order from the Commander-in-Chief, the Light Brigade, 607 men in all, charged what has been rightly described as "the Russian army in position". Of the 607 men 198 came back. Long, painful, and hopeless were the disputes about this fatal order. The controversy can never be wholly settled. The officer who bore the order was one of the first who fell in the onset. All Europe, all the world, rang with wonder and admiration of the futile and splendid charge.' Lord Tennyson says that on December 2nd his father wrote *The Charge of the Light Brigade* in a few minutes, after reading the description in the *Times* in which occurred the phrase 'some one had blundered', and this was the origin of the metre of his poem.[1]

4. *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington.* On the afternoon of September 14, 1852, the Duke of Wellington died in his sleep at Walmer Castle. Tennyson had never known him intimately, but we cannot wonder that such a character inspired him with a peculiar enthusiasm. Unswerving fidelity to truth and to duty, a simplicity of life and aim which no fame or flattery could spoil, were among the great qualities which made him so conspicuous. 'It never entered into the mind of any one to suppose,' says Justin McCarthy, 'that the Duke of Wellington was actuated in any step he took or advice he gave by any feeling but a desire for the good of the State.'[2] The ode as a whole is remarkable as showing Tennyson's extraordinary advance in artistic development. The sweetness of the rhythm, the terse force of the words, the rising of the emotion as it were on 'the tides of music's golden sea', only to die away in lingering notes of peace—all mark the master-hand.

GROUP E. LATER CLASSICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL POEMS

1. Our last group contains two poems which show us Tennyson's matured powers. *Tithonus*, especially, which was first published in 1860, is, as a work of art, a wonderful production. Polished, musical, simple, in it we look in vain for the faults of earlier days. The highly imaginative landscape, the glimmering thresholds of the dawn, the wild team, which 'shake the darkness from their loosen'd manes, and beat the twilight into flakes of fire', combine to form a dim background of misty light, against

[1] *Life of Tennyson*, p. 320.
[2] *History of our own Times*, ch. xxiii.

which we see the wan figure of Tithonus,—the old man who in youth asked and received the boon of eternal life. But even more significant of maturity is the philosophical problem involved. What *is* Life? Swift, too, had faced this question, and in the awful story of the Struldbrugs he has painted the last horrors of continued existence without progress. To his diseased imagination it seemed like the disintegration of all things except consciousness. Tennyson's picture is far less repellent. Tithonus is not in torture: his mind is clear, his body at ease, but the case is none the less desperate. It is infinite grief to have the memory of joy in a life bereft of hope. To this man there is no *Future*; so he despairs, and begs for death. Even the most refined of the pleasures of sense have worn out. He knows that Beauty is there, nay, her pitying tears are on his cheek, but the responsive glow is gone: 'the eye is not satisfied with seeing.' Old age always presents something of this experience to the thoughtful. The springs of mere enjoyment begin to fail: the soul turns upon herself with the abrupt query, what next? and whither? It may be that Browning is suggesting the same thought in that most difficult of poems, 'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came.'

2. In *The Voyage* we may read the solution, and it is fitting to close this volume with that which is so eminently characteristic of the poet. Probably no object in nature had more charm for Tennyson than the sea. Nothing seems so human in its moods, nothing exercises such an abiding fascination over its votaries. The idea of freedom, of unlimited force, of tireless vitality are all suggested by it. The close of Enoch Arden's heroic life-struggle is fittingly attended by the sea-storm: Arthur passes over moonlit water to Avilion. But, possibly, the deepest meaning of the sea is expressed by this poem. It is that of unlimited scope for energy. The craving for a larger life, for the satisfaction of the thirst for knowledge, for the attainment of the Ideal, all this and more was symbolized to Tennyson by the gallant ship ready to weigh anchor. As the body fails, the longing of the spirit for more power of expression, and more scope, grows stronger, and with it the conviction deepens that its bonds are physical and will snap at the touch of death. So the end becomes a loosing of the cable on a tide too deep for sound or foam, a launching out on the boundless Deep, a Crossing of the Bar, beyond which is the Pilot and Home. It is a very singular conception and worthy of a great mind. The ordinary thought is that of the vessel coming into Port—of the resumption of the familiar routine, the beloved but perhaps narrow life. Tennyson reminds us that the outlook is far grander than this. In *The Voyage* we see life lived in the pursuit of an Ideal, and it is full of energy. Over the waters they follow the vision: at intervals they catch glimpses of its loveliness—but is it mental, moral, or spiritual? Is it Knowledge, or Virtue, or

Heavenly Hope, or rather is it not all three, Absolute Truth in her perfect beauty? But

> Never sail of ours was furl'd
> Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn;

and at last to colder climes they came. The crew are feeble, visibly failing, but still undismayed, still following. We know it is the end: that end which is yet the beginning. Life in its fullness is found only in the strenuous following of a great aim, unrealized it may be as yet, but still unflinchingly pursued. The sceptic may sneer as did Modred, to him it is 'a ship of fools', the end may have the chill of winter, and 'after that the dark', but Tennyson leaves us in no doubt as to his deepest convictions. Man's destiny is '*beyond* the sunset and the baths of all the western stars', and, in the words of another poet,

> Life, I repeat, is energy of love
> Divine or human; exercised in pain,
> In strife, in tribulation: and ordained,
> If so approved and sanctified, to pass,
> Through shades and silent rest, to endless joy.[1]

[1] Wordsworth, *Excursion*.

ENGLISH IDYLS AND OTHER POEMS

THE EPIC

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-eve—
The game of forfeits done—the girls all kiss'd
Beneath the sacred bush and past away—
The parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall,
The host, and I sat round the wassail-bowl,
Then half-way ebb'd: and there we held a talk,
How all the old honour had from Christmas gone,
Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd games
In some odd nooks like this; till I, tired out
With cutting eights that day upon the pond,
Where, three times slipping from the outer edge,
I bump'd the ice into three several stars,
Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard
The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,
Now harping on the church commissioners,
Now hawking at Geology and schism;
Until I woke, and found him settled down
Upon the general decay of faith
Right thro' the world—'at home was little left,
And none abroad: there was no anchor, none,
To hold by.' Francis, laughing, clapt his hand
On Everard's shoulder, with 'I hold by him.'
'And I,' quoth Everard, 'by the wassail-bowl.'
'Why yes,' I said, 'we knew your gift that way
At college: but another which you had—
I mean of verse (for so we held it then)—
What came of that?' 'You know,' said Frank, 'he burnt

His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve books'—
And then to me demanding why? 'Oh, sir,
He thought that nothing new was said, or else
Something so said 'twas nothing—that a truth
Looks freshest in the fashion of the day:
God knows: he has a mint of reasons: ask.
It pleased *me* well enough.' 'Nay, nay,' said Hall,
'Why take the style of those heroic times?
For nature brings not back the Mastodon,
Nor we those times; and why should any man
Remodel models? these twelve books of mine
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,
Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt.' 'But I,'
Said Francis, 'pick'd the eleventh from this hearth,
And have it: keep a thing, its use will come.
I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes.'
He laugh'd, and I, though sleepy, like a horse
That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my ears;
For I remember'd Everard's college fame
When we were Freshmen: then at my request
He brought it; and the poet little urged,
But with some prelude of disparagement,
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,
Deep-chested music, and to this result.

MORTE D'ARTHUR

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonness about their Lord,
King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king:
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seëst, and lightly bring me word.'
To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word.'
So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.
There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth

And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded king.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bad thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud.

'And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?

The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost.'
So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'
To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'
Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.
Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.'
And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
'My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.'
So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.
But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, 'Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

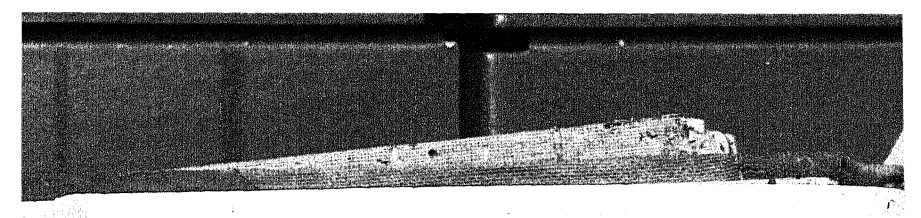
Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in the barge,'
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the daïs-throne—were parch'd with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,

From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
'Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'
And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge:
'The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within Himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seëst—if indeed I go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

Here ended Hall, and our last light, that long
Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness, flared and fell:
At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound,
And waked with silence, grunted 'Good!' but we
Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he read—
Perhaps some modern touches here and there
Redeem'd it from the charge of nothingness—
Or else we loved the man, and prized his work;
I know not: but we, sitting, as I said,
The cock crew loud; as at that time of year
The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn:
Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,
'There now—that's nothing!' drew a little back,
And drove his heel into the smoulder'd log,
That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue:
And so to bed; where yet in sleep I seem'd
To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
Point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams
Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port; and all the people cried,
'Arthur is come again: he cannot die.'
Then those that stood upon the hills behind
Repeated—'come again, and thrice as fair;'
And, further inland, voices echoed—'come
With all good things, and war shall be no more.'
At this a hundred bells began to peal,
That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed
The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas morn.



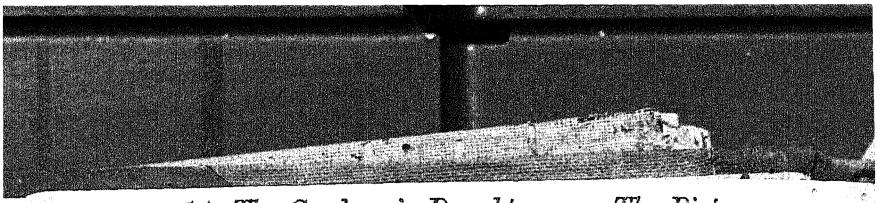
THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER; OR, THE PICTURES

THIS morning is the morning of the day,
When I and Eustace from the city went
To see the Gardener's Daughter; I and he,
Brothers in Art; a friendship so complete
Portion'd in halves between us, that we grew
The fable of the city where we dwelt.
My Eustace might have sat for Hercules;
So muscular he spread, so broad of breast.
He, by some law that holds in love, and draws
The greater to the lesser, long desired
A certain miracle of symmetry,
A miniature of loveliness, all grace
Summ'd up and closed in little;—Juliet, she
So light of foot, so light of spirit—oh, she
To me myself, for some three careless moons,
The summer pilot of an empty heart
Unto the shores of nothing! Know you not
Such touches are but embassies of love,
To tamper with the feelings, ere he found
Empire for life? but Eustace painted her,
And said to me, she sitting with us then,
'When will *you* paint like this?' and I replied,
(My words were half in earnest, half in jest,)
''Tis not your work, but Love's. Love, unperceived,
A more ideal Artist he than all,
Came, drew your pencil from you, made those eyes
Darker than darkest pansies, and that hair
More black than ashbuds in the front of March.'
And Juliet answer'd laughing, 'Go and see
The Gardener's daughter: trust me, after that,
You scarce can fail to match his masterpiece.'
And up we rose, and on the spur we went.
Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.

News from the humming city comes to it
In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you hear
The windy clanging of the minster clock;
Although between it and the garden lies
A league of grass, wash'd by a slow broad stream,
That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the oar,
Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
Crown'd with the minster-towers.
The fields between
Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-udder'd kine,
And all about the large lime feathers low,
The lime a summer home of murmurous wings.
In that still place she, hoarded in herself,
Grew, seldom seen; not less among us lived
Her fame from lip to lip. Who had not heard
Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter? Where was he,
So blunt in memory, so old at heart,
At such a distance from his youth in grief,
That, having seen, forgot? The common mouth,
So gross to express delight, in praise of her
Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,
And Beauty such a mistress of the world.
And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,
Would play with flying forms and images,
Yet this is also true, that, long before
I look'd upon her, when I heard her name
My heart was like a prophet to my heart,
And told me I should love. A crowd of hopes,
That sought to sow themselves like winged seeds,
Born out of everything I heard and saw,
Flutter'd about my senses and my soul;
And vague desires, like fitful blasts of balm
To one that travels quickly, made the air
Of Life delicious, and all kinds of thought,
That verged upon them, sweeter than the dream
Dream'd by a happy man, when the dark East,
Unseen, is brightening to his bridal morn.
And sure this orbit of the memory folds
For ever in itself the day we went
To see her. All the land in flowery squares,

Beneath a broad and equal-blowing wind,
Smelt of the coming summer, as one large cloud
Drew downward: but all else of Heaven was pure
Up to the Sun, and May from verge to verge,
And May with me from head to heel. And now,
As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it were
The hour just flown, that morn with all its sound,
(For those old Mays had thrice the life of these,)
Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot to graze,
And, where the hedge-row cuts the pathway, stood,
Leaning his horns into the neighbour field,
And lowing to his fellows. From the woods
Came voices of the well-contented doves.
The lark could scarce get out his notes for joy,
But shook his song together as he near'd
His happy home, the ground. To left and right,
The cuckoo told his name to all the hills;
The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm;
The redcap whistled; and the nightingale
Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of day.
And Eustace turn'd, and smiling said to me,
'Hear how the bushes echo! by my life,
These birds have joyful thoughts. Think you they sing
Like poets, from the vanity of song?
Or have they any sense of why they sing?
And would they praise the heavens for what they have?'
And I made answer, 'Were there nothing else
For which to praise the heavens but only love,
That only love were cause enough for praise.'
Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read my thought,
And on we went; but ere an hour had pass'd,
We reach'd a meadow slanting to the North;
Down which a well-worn pathway courted us
To one green wicket in a privet hedge;
This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk
Thro' crowded lilac-ambush trimly pruned;
And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume, blew
Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.
The garden stretches southward. In the midst
A cedar spread his dark-green layers of shade.
The garden-glasses shone, and momently
The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights.

'Eustace,' I said, 'this wonder keeps the house.'
He nodded, but a moment afterwards
He cried, 'Look! look!' Before he ceased I turn'd,
And, ere a star can wink, beheld her there.
For up the porch there grew an Eastern rose,
That, flowering high, the last night's gale had caught,
And blown across the walk. One arm aloft—
Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to the shape—
Holding the bush, to fix it back, she stood.
A single stream of all her soft brown hair
Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the flowers
Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering
Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist—
Ah, happy shade—and still went wavering down,
But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might have danced
The greensward into greener circles, dipt,
And mix'd with shadows of the common ground!
But the full day dwelt on her brows, and sunn'd
Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe-bloom,
And doubled his own warmth against her lips,
And on the bounteous wave of such a breast
As never pencil drew. Half light, half shade,
She stood, a sight to make an old man young.
So rapt, we near'd the house; but she, a Rose
In roses, mingled with her fragrant toil,
Nor heard us come, nor from her tendance turn'd
Into the world without; till close at hand,
And almost ere I knew mine own intent,
This murmur broke the stillness of that air
Which brooded round about her:
'Ah, one rose,
One rose, but one, by those fair fingers cull'd,
Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on lips
Less exquisite than thine.'
She look'd: but all
Suffused with blushes—neither self-possess'd
Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and that,
Divided in a graceful quiet—paused,
And dropt the branch she held, and turning, wound
Her looser hair in braid, and stirr'd her lips
For some sweet answer, tho' no answer came,
Nor yet refused the rose, but granted it,



And moved away, and left me, statue-like,
In act to render thanks.
I, that whole day,
Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd there
Till every daisy slept, and Love's white star
Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in the dusk.
So home we went, and all the livelong way
With solemn gibe did Eustace banter me.
'Now,' said he, 'will you climb the top of Art.
You cannot fail but work in hues to dim
The Titianic Flora. Will you match
My Juliet? you, not you,—the Master, Love,
A more ideal Artist he than all.'
So home I went, but could not sleep for joy,
Reading her perfect features in the gloom,
Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and o'er,
And shaping faithful record of the glance
That graced the giving—such a noise of life
Swarm'd in the golden present, such a voice
Call'd to me from the years to come, and such
A length of bright horizon rimm'd the dark.
And all that night I heard the watchmen peal
The sliding season: all that night I heard
The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy hours.
The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good,
O'er the mute city stole with folded wings,
Distilling odours on me as they went
To greet their fairer sisters of the East.
Love at first sight, first-born, and heir to all,
Made this night thus. Henceforward squall nor storm
Could keep me from that Eden where she dwelt.
Light pretexts drew me: sometimes a Dutch love
For tulips; then for roses, moss or musk,
To grace my city-rooms; or fruits and cream
Served in the weeping elm; and more and more
A word could bring the colour to my cheek;
A thought would fill my eyes with happy dew;
Love trebled life within me, and with each
The year increased.
The daughters of the year,
One after one, thro' that still garden pass'd:
Each garlanded with her peculiar flower

Danced into light, and died into the shade;
And each in passing touch'd with some new grace,
Or seem'd to touch her, so that day by day,
Like one that never can be wholly known,
Her beauty grew; till Autumn brought an hour
For Eustace, when I heard his deep 'I will,'
Breathed, like the covenant of a God, to hold
From thence thro' all the worlds: but I rose up
Full of his bliss, and following her dark eyes
Felt earth as air beneath me, till I reach'd
The wicket-gate, and found her standing there.
There sat we down upon a garden mound,
Two mutually enfolded; Love, the third,
Between us, in the circle of his arms
Enwound us both; and over many a range
Of waning lime the grey cathedral towers,
Across a hazy glimmer of the west,
Reveal'd their shining windows: from them clash'd
The bells; we listen'd; with the time we play'd;
We spoke of other things; we coursed about
The subject most at heart, more near and near,
Like doves about a dovecote, wheeling round
The central wish, until we settled there.
Then, in that time and place, I spoke to her,
Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own,
Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,
Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,
A woman's heart, the heart of her I loved;
And in that time and place she answer'd me,
And in the compass of three little words,
More musical than ever came in one,
The silver fragments of a broken voice,
Made me most happy, faltering 'I am thine.'
Shall I cease here? Is this enough to say
That my desire, like all strongest hopes,
By its own energy fulfill'd itself,
Merged in completion? Would you learn at full
How passion rose thro' circumstantial grades
Beyond all grades develop'd? and indeed
I had not staid so long to tell you all,
But while I mused came Memory with sad eyes,
Holding the folded annals of my youth;

And while I mused, Love with knit brows went by,
And with a flying finger swept my lips,
And spake, 'Be wise: not easily forgiven
Are those, who setting wide the doors, that bar
The secret bridal chambers of the heart,
Let in the day.' Here, then, my words have end.
Yet might I tell of meetings, of farewells—
Of that which came between, more sweet than each,
In whispers, like the whispers of the leaves
That tremble round a nightingale—in sighs
Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for utterance,
Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I not tell
Of difference, reconcilement, pledges given,
And vows, where there was never need of vows,
And kisses, where the heart on one wild leap
Hung tranced from all pulsation, as above
The heavens between their fairy fleeces pale
Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleeting stars;
Or while the balmy glooming, crescent-lit,
Spread the light haze along the river-shores,
And in the hollows; or as once we met
Unheedful, tho' beneath a whispering rain
Night slid down one long stream of sighing wind,
And in her bosom bore the baby, Sleep.
But this whole hour your eyes have been intent
On that veil'd picture—veil'd, for what it holds
May not be dwelt on by the common day.
This prelude has prepared thee. Raise thy soul;
Make thine heart ready with thine eyes: the time
Is come to raise the veil.
Behold her there,
As I beheld her ere she knew my heart,
My first, last love; the idol of my youth,
The darling of my manhood, and, alas!
Now the most blessed memory of mine age.

DORA

With farmer Allan at the farm abode
William and Dora. William was his son,
And she his niece. He often look'd at them,
And often thought 'I'll make them man and wife.'
Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,
And yearn'd towards William; but the youth, because
He had been always with her in the house,
Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day
When Allan call'd his son, and said, 'My son:
I married late, but I would wish to see
My grandchild on my knees before I die:
And I have set my heart upon a match.
Now therefore look to Dora; she is well
To look to; thrifty too beyond her age.
She is my brother's daughter: he and I
Had once hard words, and parted, and he died
In foreign lands; but for his sake I bred
His daughter Dora: take her for your wife;
For I have wish'd this marriage, night and day,
For many years.' But William answer'd short;
'I cannot marry Dora; by my life,
I will not marry Dora.' Then the old man
Was wroth, and doubled up his hands, and said:
'You will not, boy! you dare to answer thus!
But in my time a father's word was law,
And so it shall be now for me. Look to it;
Consider, William: take a month to think,
And let me have an answer to my wish;
Or, by the Lord that made me, you shall pack,
And never more darken my doors again.'
But William answer'd madly; bit his lips,
And broke away. The more he look'd at her
The less he liked her; and his ways were harsh;
But Dora bore them meekly. Then before
The month was out he left his father's house,
And hired himself to work within the fields;

And half in love, half spite, he woo'd and wed
A labourer's daughter, Mary Morrison.
Then, when the bells were ringing, Allan call'd
His niece and said: 'My girl, I love you well;
But if you speak with him that was my son,
Or change a word with her he calls his wife,
My home is none of yours. My will is law.'
And Dora promised, being meek. She thought,
'It cannot be: my uncle's mind will change!'
And days went on, and there was born a boy
To William; then distresses came on him;
And day by day he pass'd his father's gate,
Heart-broken, and his father help'd him not.
But Dora stored what little she could save,
And sent it them by stealth, nor did they know
Who sent it; till at last a fever seized
On William, and in harvest time he died.
Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and thought
Hard things of Dora. Dora came and said:
'I have obey'd my uncle until now,
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro' me
This evil came on William at the first.
But, Mary, for the sake of him that 's gone,
And for your sake, the woman that he chose,
And for this orphan, I am come to you:
You know there has not been for these five years
So full a harvest: let me take the boy,
And I will set him in my uncle's eye
Among the wheat; that when his heart is glad
Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,
And bless him for the sake of him that 's gone.'
And Dora took the child, and went her way
Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound
That was unsown, where many poppies grew.
Far off the farmer came into the field
And spied her not; for none of all his men
Dare tell him Dora waited with the child;
And Dora would have risen and gone to him,
But her heart fail'd her; and the reapers reap'd,
And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.
But when the morrow came, she rose and took

The child once more, and sat upon the mound;
And made a little wreath of all the flowers
That grew about, and tied it round his hat
To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye.
Then when the farmer pass'd into the field
He spied her, and he left his men at work,
And came and said, 'Where were you yesterday?
Whose child is that? What are you doing here?'
So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,
And answer'd softly, 'This is William's child!'
'And did I not,' said Allan, 'did I not
Forbid you, Dora?' Dora said again,
'Do with me as you will, but take the child
And bless him for the sake of him that's gone!'
And Allan said, 'I see it is a trick
Got up betwixt you and the woman there.
I must be taught my duty, and by you!
You knew my word was law, and yet you dared
To slight it. Well—for I will take the boy;
But go you hence, and never see me more.'
So saying, he took the boy, that cried aloud
And struggled hard. The wreath of flowers fell
At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her hands,
And the boy's cry came to her from the field,
More and more distant. She bow'd down her head,
Remembering the day when first she came,
And all the things that had been. She bow'd down
And wept in secret; and the reapers reap'd,
And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.
Then Dora went to Mary's house, and stood
Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy
Was not with Dora. She broke out in praise
To God, that help'd her in her widowhood.
And Dora said, 'My uncle took the boy;
But, Mary, let me live and work with you:
He says that he will never see me more.'
Then answer'd Mary, 'This shall never be,
That thou shouldst take my trouble on thyself:
And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,
For he will teach him hardness, and to slight
His mother; therefore thou and I will go,
And I will have my boy, and bring him home;

And I will beg of him to take thee back;
But if he will not take thee back again,
Then thou and I will live within one house,
And work for William's child, until he grows
Of age to help us.'

So the women kiss'd
Each other, and set out, and reach'd the farm.
The door was off the latch: they peep'd, and saw
The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's knees,
Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,
And clapt him on the hands and on the cheeks,
Like one that loved him; and the lad stretch'd out
And babbled for the golden seal, that hung
From Allan's watch, and sparkled by the fire.
Then they came in: but when the boy beheld
His mother, he cried out to come to her:
And Allan set him down, and Mary said:
'O Father!—if you let me call you so—
I never came a-begging for myself,
Or William, or this child; but now I come
For Dora: take her back; she loves you well.
O Sir, when William died, he died at peace
With all men; for I ask'd him, and he said,
He could not ever rue his marrying me—
I had been a patient wife: but, Sir, he said
That he was wrong to cross his father thus:
"God bless him!" he said, "and may he never know
The troubles I have gone thro'!" Then he turn'd
His face and pass'd—unhappy that I am!
But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you
Will make him hard, and he will learn to slight
His father's memory; and take Dora back,
And let all this be as it was before.'
So Mary said, and Dora hid her face
By Mary. There was silence in the room;
And all at once the old man burst in sobs:—
'I have been to blame—to blame. I have kill'd my son.
I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my dear son.
May God forgive me!—I have been to blame.
Kiss me, my children.'

Then they clung about
The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many times.

And all the man was broken with remorse;
And all his love came back a hundredfold;
And for three hours he sobb'd o'er William's child,
Thinking of William.

So those four abode
Within one house together; and as years
Went forward, Mary took another mate;
But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

AUDLEY COURT

'THE Bull, the Fleece are cramm'd, and not a room
For love or money. Let us picnic there
At Audley Court.'

I spoke, while Audley feast
Humm'd like a hive all round the narrow quay,
To Francis, with a basket on his arm,
To Francis just alighted from the boat,
And breathing of the sea. 'With all my heart,'
Said Francis. Then we shoulder'd thro' the swarm,
And rounded by the stillness of the beach
To where the bay runs up its latest horn.
We left the dying ebb that faintly lipp'd
The flat red granite; so by many a sweep
Of meadow smooth from aftermath we reach'd
The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd thro' all
The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycamores,
And cross'd the garden to the gardener's lodge,
With all its casements bedded, and its walls
And chimneys muffled in the leafy vine.

There, on a slope of orchard, Francis laid
A damask napkin wrought with horse and hound,
Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of home,
And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly-made,
Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret lay,
Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolks
Imbedded and injellied; last, with these,
A flask of cider from his father's vats,
Prime, which I knew; and so we sat and eat,
And talk'd old matters over; who was dead,

Who married, who was like to be, and how
The races went, and who would rent the hall:
Then touch'd upon the game, how scarce it was
This season; glancing thence, discuss'd the farm,
The four-field system, and the price of grain;
And struck upon the corn-laws, where we split,
And came again together on the king
With heated faces; till he laugh'd aloud;
And, while the blackbird on the pippin hung
To hear him, clapt his hand in mine and sang—

'Oh! who would fight and march and countermarch,
Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field,
And shovell'd up into a bloody trench
Where no one knows? but let me live my life.

'Oh! who would cast and balance at a desk,
Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legg'd stool,
Till all his juice is dried, and all his joints
Are full of chalk? but let me live my life.

'Who'd serve the state? for if I carved my name
Upon the cliffs that guard my native land,
I might as well have traced it in the sands;
The sea wastes all: but let me live my life.

'Oh! who would love? I woo'd a woman once,
But she was sharper than an eastern wind,
And all my heart turn'd from her, as a thorn
Turns from the sea: but let me live my life.'

He sang his song, and I replied with mine:
I found it in a volume, all of songs,
Knock'd down to me, when old Sir Robert's pride,
His books—the more the pity, so I said—
Came to the hammer here in March—and this—
I set the words, and added names I knew.

'Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and dream of me:
Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's arm,
And sleeping, haply dream her arm is mine.

'Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's arm;
Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,
For thou art fairer than all else that is.

'Sleep, breathing health and peace upon her breast:
Sleep, breathing love and trust against her lip:
I go to-night: I come to-morrow morn.

'I go, but I return: I would I were

The pilot of the darkness and the dream.
Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream of me.'
So sang we each to either, Francis Hale,
The farmer's son who lived across the bay,
My friend; and I, that having wherewithal,
And in the fallow leisure of my life
A rolling stone of here and everywhere,
Did what I would; but ere the night we rose
And saunter'd home beneath a moon, that, just
In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf
Twilights of airy silver, till we reach'd
The limit of the hills; and as we sank
From rock to rock upon the glooming quay,
The town was hush'd beneath us: lower down
The bay was oily-calm; the harbour-buoy
With one green sparkle ever and anon
Dipt by itself, and we were glad at heart.

WALKING TO THE MAIL

John. I'm glad I walk'd. How fresh the meadows look
Above the river, and, but a month ago,
The whole hill-side was redder than a fox.
Is yon plantation where this byway joins
The turnpike?

James. Yes.

John. And when does this come by?

James. The mail? At one o'clock.

John. What is it now?

James. A quarter to.

John. Whose house is that I see?
No, not the County Member's with the vane:
Up higher with the yew-tree by it, and half
A score of gables.

James. That? Sir Edward Head's:
But he's abroad: the place is to be sold.

John. Oh, his. He was not broken.

James. No, sir, he,
Vex'd with a morbid devil in his blood
That veil'd the world with jaundice, hid his face

From all men, and commercing with himself,
He lost the sense that handles daily life—
That keeps us all in order more or less—
And sick of home went overseas for change.

John. And whither?

James. Nay, who knows? he's here and there.
But let him go; his devil goes with him,
As well as with his tenant, Jocky Dawes.

John. What's that?

James. You saw the man—on Monday, was it?—
There by the humpback'd willow; half stands up
And bristles; half has fall'n and made a bridge;
And there he caught the younker tickling trout—
Caught *in flagrante*—what's the Latin word?—
Delicto: but his house, for so they say,
Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that shook
The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt at doors,
And rummaged like a rat: no servant stay'd:
The farmer vext packs up his beds and chairs,
And all his household stuff; and with his boy
Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the tilt,
Sets out, and meets a friend who hails him, 'What!
You're flitting!' 'Yes, we're flitting,' says the ghost
(For they had pack'd the thing among the beds).
'Oh well,' says he, 'you flitting with us too—
Jack, turn the horses' heads and home again.'

John. He left *his* wife behind; for so I heard.

James. He left her, yes. I met my lady once:
A woman like a butt, and harsh as crabs.

John. Oh yet but I remember, ten years back—
'Tis now at least ten years—and then she was—
You could not light upon a sweeter thing:
A body slight and round, and like a pear
In growing, modest eyes, a hand, a foot,
Lessening in perfect cadence, and a skin
As clean and white as privet when it flowers.

James. Aye, aye, the blossom fades, and they that loved
At first like dove and dove were cat and dog.
She was the daughter of a cottager,
Out of her sphere. What betwixt shame and pride,
New things and old, himself and her, she sour'd
To what she is: a nature never kind!

Like men, like manners: like breeds like, they say.
Kind nature is the best: those manners next
That fit us like a nature second-hand;
Which are indeed the manners of the great.
John. But I had heard it was this bill that past,
And fear of change at home, that drove him hence.
James. That was the last drop in the cup of gall.
I once was near him, when his bailiff brought
A Chartist pike. You should have seen him wince
As from a venomous thing: he thought himself
A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a cry
Should break his sleep by night, and his nice eyes
Should see the raw mechanic's bloody thumbs
Sweat on his blazon'd chairs; but, sir, you know
That these two parties still divide the world—
Of those that want, and those that have: and still
The same old sore breaks out from age to age
With much the same result. Now I myself,
A Tory to the quick, was as a boy
Destructive, when I had not what I would.
I was at school—a college in the South:
There lived a flayflint near; we stole his fruit,
His hens, his eggs; but there was law for *us*;
We paid in person. He had a sow, sir. She,
With meditative grunts of much content,
Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun and mud.
By night we dragg'd her to the college tower
From her warm bed, and up the corkscrew stair
With hand and rope we haled the groaning sow,
And on the leads we kept her till she pigg'd.
Large range of prospect had the mother sow,
And but for daily loss of one she loved,
As one by one we took them—but for this—
As never sow was higher in this world—
Might have been happy: but what lot is pure?
We took them all, till she was left alone
Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,
And so return'd unfarrow'd to her sty.
John. They found you out?
James. Not they.
John. Well—after all—
What know we of the secret of a man?

His nerves were wrong. What ails us, who are sound,
That we should mimic this raw fool the world,
Which charts us all in its coarse blacks or whites,
As ruthless as a baby with a worm,
As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows
To Pity—more from ignorance than will.
But put your best foot forward, or I fear
That we shall miss the mail: and here it comes
With five at top: as quaint a four-in-hand
As you shall see—three piebalds and a roan.

EDWIN MORRIS; OR, THE LAKE

O ME, my pleasant rambles by the lake,
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of a year,
My one Oasis in the dust and drouth
Of city life! I was a sketcher then:
See here, my doing: curves of mountain, bridge,
Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built
When men knew how to build, upon a rock,
With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock:
And here, new-comers in an ancient hold,
New-comers from the Mersey, millionaires,
Here lived the Hills—a Tudor-chimnied bulk
Of mellow brickwork on an isle of bowers.

O me, my pleasant rambles by the lake
With Edwin Morris and with Edward Bull
The curate; he was fatter than his cure.

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the names,
Long learned names of agaric, moss and fern,
Who forged a thousand theories of the rocks,
Who taught me how to skate, to row, to swim,
Who read me rhymes elaborately good,
His own—I call'd him Crichton, for he seem'd
All-perfect, finish'd to the finger-nail.

And once I ask'd him of his early life,
And his first passion; and he answer'd me;

And well his words became him: was he not
A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence
Stored from all flowers? Poet-like he spoke.

'My love for Nature is as old as I;
But thirty moons, one honeymoon to that,
And three rich se'nnights more, my love for her.
My love for Nature and my love for her,
Of different ages, like twin-sisters grew,
Twin-sisters differently beautiful.
To some full music rose and sank the sun,
And some full music seem'd to move and change
With all the varied changes of the dark,
And either twilight and the day between;
For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again
Revolving toward fulfilment, made it sweet
To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to breathe.'

Or this or something like to this he spoke.
Then said the fat-faced curate Edward Bull:
'I take it, God made the woman for the man,
And for the good and increase of the world.
A pretty face is well, and this is well,
To have a dame indoors, that trims us up,
And keeps us tight; but these unreal ways
Seem but the theme of writers, and indeed
Worn threadbare. Man is made of solid stuff.
I say, God made the woman for the man,
And for the good and increase of the world.'

'Parson,' said I, 'you pitch the pipe too low:
But I have sudden touches, and can run
My faith beyond my practice into his:
Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,
I do not hear the bells upon my cap,
I scarce hear other music: yet say on.
What should one give to light on such a dream?'
I ask'd him half-sardonically.

'Give?
Give all thou art,' he answer'd, and a light
Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy cheek;

'I would have hid her needle in my heart,
To save her little finger from a scratch
No deeper than the skin: my ears could hear
Her lightest breaths: her least remark was worth
The experience of the wise. I went and came;
Her voice fled always thro' the summer land;
I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy days!
The flower of each, those moments when we met,
The crown of all, we met to part no more.'

Were not his words delicious, I a beast
To take them as I did? but something jarr'd;
Whether he spoke too largely; that there seem'd
A touch of something false, some self-conceit,
Or over-smoothness: howsoe'er it was,
He scarcely hit my humour, and I said:

'Friend Edwin, do not think yourself alone
Of all men happy. Shall not Love to me,
As in the Latin song I learnt at school,
Sneeze out a full God-bless-you right and left?
But you can talk: yours is a kindly vein:
I have, I think,—Heaven knows—as much within;
Have, or should have, but for a thought or two,
That like a purple beech among the greens
Looks out of place: 'tis from no want in her:
It is my shyness, or my self-distrust,
Or something of a wayward modern mind
Dissecting passion. Time will set me right.'

So spoke I knowing not the things that were.
Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward Bull:
'God made the woman for the use of man,
And for the good and increase of the world.'
And I and Edwin laugh'd; and now we paused
About the windings of the marge to hear
The soft wind blowing over meadowy holms
And alders, garden-isles; and now we left
The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran
By ripply shallows of the lisping lake,
Delighted with the freshness and the sound.

But, when the bracken rusted on their crags,
My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by him
That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk,
The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.
'Tis true, we met; one hour I had, no more:
She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous suit*,
The close 'Your Letty, only yours'; and this
Thrice underscored. The friendly mist of morn
Clung to the lake. I boated over, ran
My craft aground, and heard with beating heart
The Sweet Gale rustle round the shelving keel;
And out I stept, and up I crept: she moved,
Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering flowers:
Then low and sweet I whistled thrice; and she,
She turn'd, we closed, we kiss'd, swore faith, I breathed
In some new planet: a silent cousin stole
Upon us and departed: 'Leave,' she cried,
'O leave me!' 'Never, dearest, never: here
I brave the worst!' And while we stood like fools
Embracing, all at once a score of pugs
And poodles yell'd within, and out they came—
Trustees and Aunts and Uncles. 'What, with him!
Go!' (shrill'd the cotton-spinning chorus). 'Him!'
I choked. Again they shriek'd the burthen 'Him!'
Again with hands of wild rejection 'Go!—
Girl, get you in!' She went—and in one month
They wedded her to sixty thousand pounds,
To lands in Kent and messuages in York,
And slight Sir Robert with his watery smile
And educated whisker. But for me,
They set an ancient creditor to work:
It seems I broke a close with force and arms:
There came a mystic token from the king
To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy!
I read, and fled by night, and flying turn'd:
Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below:
I turn'd once more, close-button'd to the storm;
So left the place, left Edwin, nor have seen
Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared to hear.

Nor cared to hear? perhaps: yet long ago
I have pardon'd little Letty; not indeed,

It may be, for her own dear sake, but this—
She seems a part of those fresh days to me;
For in the dust and drouth of London life
She moves among my visions of the lake,
While the prime swallow dips his wing, or then
While the gold-lily blows, and overhead
The light cloud smoulders on the summer crag.

ST. SIMEON STYLITES

Altho' I be the basest of mankind,
From scalp to sole one slough and crust of sin,
Unfit for earth, unfit for heaven, scarce meet
For troops of devils, mad with blasphemy,
I will not cease to grasp the hope I hold
Of saintdom, and to clamour, mourn and sob,
Battering the gates of heaven with storms of prayer,
Have mercy, Lord, and take away my sin.
Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty God,
This not be all in vain, that thrice ten years,
Thrice multiplied by superhuman pangs,
In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and cold,
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous throes and cramps,
A sign betwixt the meadow and the cloud,
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and sleet, and snow;
And I had hoped that ere this period closed
Thou wouldst have caught me up into thy rest,
Denying not these weather-beaten limbs
The meed of saints, the white robe and the palm.
O take the meaning, Lord: I do not breathe,
Not whisper, any murmur of complaint.
Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold to this, were still
Less burthen, by ten-hundred-fold, to bear,
Than were those lead-like tons of sin, that crush'd
My spirit flat before thee.
O Lord, Lord,
Thou knowest I bore this better at the first,
For I was strong and hale of body then;

And tho' my teeth, which now are dropt away,
Would chatter with the cold, and all my beard
Was fagg'd with icy fringes in the moon,
I drown'd the whoopings of the owl with sound
Of pious hymns and psalms, and sometimes saw
An angel stand and watch me, as I sang.
Now am I feeble grown; my end draws nigh;
I hope my end draws nigh: half deaf I am,
So that I scarce can hear the people hum
About the column's base, and almost blind,
And scarce can recognize the fields I know;
And both my thighs are rotted with the dew;
Yet cease I not to clamour and to cry,
While my stiff spine can hold my weary head,
Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from the stone,
Have mercy, mercy: take away my sin.
O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my soul,
Who may be saved? who is it may be saved?
Who may be made a saint, if I fail here?
Show me the man hath suffer'd more than I.
For did not all thy martyrs die one death?
For either they were stoned, or crucified,
Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or sawn
In twain beneath the ribs; but I die here
To-day, and whole years long, a life of death.
Bear witness, if I could have found a way
(And heedfully I sifted all my thought)
More slowly-painful to subdue this home
Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and hate,
I had not stinted practice, O my God.
For not alone this pillar-punishment,
Not this alone I bore: but while I lived
In the white convent down the valley there,
For many weeks about my loins I wore
The rope that haled the buckets from the well,
Twisted as tight as I could knot the noose;
And spake not of it to a single soul,
Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,
Betray'd my secret penance, so that all
My brethren marvell'd greatly. More than this
I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest all.
Three winters, that my soul might grow to thee,

I lived up there on yonder mountain side.
My right leg chain'd into the crag, I lay
Pent in a roofless close of ragged stones;
Inswathed sometimes in wandering mist, and twice
Black'd with thy branding thunder, and sometimes
Sucking the damps for drink, and eating not,
Except the spare chance-gift of those that came
To touch my body and be heal'd, and live:
And they say then that I work'd miracles,
Whereof my fame is loud amongst mankind,
Cured lameness, palsies, cancers. Thou, O God,
Knowest alone whether this was or no.
Have mercy, mercy; cover all my sin.

Then, that I might be more alone with thee,
Three years I lived upon a pillar, high
Six cubits, and three years on one of twelve;
And twice three years I crouch'd on one that rose
Twenty by measure; last of all, I grew
Twice ten long weary weary years to this,
That numbers forty cubits from the soil.

I think that I have borne as much as this—
Or else I dream—and for so long a time,
If I may measure time by yon slow light,
And this high dial, which my sorrow crowns—
So much—even so.

And yet I know not well,
For that the evil ones come here, and say,
'Fall down, O Simeon: thou hast suffer'd long
For ages and for ages!' then they prate
Of penances I cannot have gone thro',
Perplexing me with lies; and oft I fall,
Maybe for months, in such blind lethargies,
That Heaven, and Earth, and Time are choked.

But yet
Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all the saints
Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men on earth
House in the shade of comfortable roofs,
Sit with their wives by fires, eat wholesome food,
And wear warm clothes, and even beasts have stalls,
I, 'tween the spring and downfall of the light,
Bow down one thousand and two hundred times,
To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the Saints;

Or in the night, after a little sleep,
I wake: the chill stars sparkle; I am wet
With drenching dews, or stiff with crackling frost.
I wear an undress'd goatskin on my back;
A grazing iron collar grinds my neck;
And in my weak, lean arms I lift the cross,
And strive and wrestle with thee till I die:
O mercy, mercy! wash away my sin.
O Lord, thou knowest what a man I am;
A sinful man, conceived and born in sin:
'Tis their own doing; this is none of mine;
Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for this,
That here come those that worship me? Ha! ha!
They think that I am somewhat. What am I?
The silly people take me for a saint,
And bring me offerings of fruit and flowers:
And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness here)
Have all in all endured as much, and more
Than many just and holy men, whose names
Are register'd and calendar'd for saints.
Good people, you do ill to kneel to me.
What is it I can have done to merit this?
I am a sinner viler than you all.
It may be I have wrought some miracles,
And cured some halt and maim'd; but what of that?
It may be, no one, even among the saints,
May match his pains with mine; but what of that?
Yet do not rise: for you may look on me,
And in your looking you may kneel to God.
Speak! is there any of you halt or maim'd?
I think you know I have some power with Heaven
From my long penance: let him speak his wish.
Yes, I can heal him. Power goes forth from me.
They say that they are heal'd. Ah, hark! they shout
'St. Simeon Stylites.' Why, if so,
God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,
God reaps a harvest in thee. If this be,
Can I work miracles and not be saved?
This is not told of any. They were saints.
It cannot be but that I shall be saved;
Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout, 'Behold a saint!'
And lower voices saint me from above.

Courage, St. Simeon! This dull chrysalis
Cracks into shining wings, and hope ere death
Spreads more and more and more, that God hath now
Sponged and made blank of crimeful record all
My mortal archives.
O my sons, my sons,
I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname
Stylites, among men; I, Simeon,
The watcher on the column till the end;
I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine bakes;
I, whose bald brows in silent hours become
Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now
From my high nest of penance here proclaim
That Pontius and Iscariot by my side
Show'd like fair seraphs. On the coals I lay,
A vessel full of sin: all hell beneath
Made me boil over. Devils pluck'd my sleeve;
Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.
I smote them with the cross; they swarm'd again.
In bed like monstrous apes they crush'd my chest:
They flapp'd my light out as I read: I saw
Their faces grow between me and my book:
With colt-like whinny and with hoggish whine
They burst my prayer. Yet this way was left,
And by this way I 'scaped them. Mortify
Your flesh, like me, with scourges and with thorns;
Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it may be, fast
Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly, with slow steps,
With slow, faint steps, and much exceeding pain,
Have scrambled past those pits of fire, that still
Sing in mine ears. But yield not me the praise:
God only thro' His bounty hath thought fit,
Among the powers and princes of this world,
To make me an example to mankind,
Which few can reach to. Yet I do not say
But that a time may come—yea, even now,
Now, now, his footsteps smite the threshold stairs
Of life—I say, that time is at the doors
When you may worship me without reproach;
For I will leave my relics in your land,
And you may carve a shrine about my dust,
And burn a fragrant lamp before my bones,

When I am gather'd to the glorious saints.
While I spake then, a sting of shrewdest pain
Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloudlike change,
In passing, with a grosser film made thick
These heavy, horny eyes. The end! the end!
Surely the end! What's here? a shape, a shade,
A flash of light. Is that the angel there
That holds a crown? Come, blessed brother, come.
I know thy glittering face. I waited long;
My brows are ready. What? deny it now?
Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I clutch it. Christ!
'Tis gone: 'tis here again; the crown! the crown!
So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,
And from it melt the dews of Paradise,
Sweet! sweet! spikenard, and balm, and frankincense.
Ah! let me not be fool'd, sweet saints: I trust
That I am whole, and clean, and meet for Heaven.
Speak, if there be a priest, a man of God,
Among you there, and let him presently
Approach, and lean a ladder on the shaft,
And climbing up into my airy home,
Deliver me the blessed sacrament;
For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,
I prophesy that I shall die to-night,
A quarter before twelve.
But thou, O Lord,
Aid all this foolish people; let them take
Example, pattern: lead them to thy light.

THE TALKING OAK

Once more the gate behind me falls;
Once more before my face
I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,
That stand within the chace.

Beyond the lodge the city lies,
Beneath its drift of smoke;
And ah! with what delighted eyes
I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,
 Ere that, which in me burn'd,
The love, that makes me thrice a man,
 Could hope itself return'd;

To yonder oak within the field
 I spoke without restraint,
And with a larger faith appeal'd
 Than Papist unto Saint.

For oft I talk'd with him apart,
 And told him of my choice,
Until he plagiarized a heart,
 And answer'd with a voice.

Tho' what he whisper'd, under Heaven
 None else could understand;
I found him garrulously given,
 A babbler in the land.

But since I heard him make reply
 Is many a weary hour;
'Twere well to question him, and try
 If yet he keeps the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,
 Broad Oak of Sumner-chace,
Whose topmost branches can discern
 The roofs of Sumner-place!

Say thou, whereon I carved her name,
 If ever maid or spouse,
As fair as my Olivia, came
 To rest beneath thy boughs.—

'O Walter, I have shelter'd here
 Whatever maiden grace
The good old Summers, year by year,
 Made ripe in Sumner-chace:

'Old Summers, when the monk was fat,
 And, issuing shorn and sleek,
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat
 The girls upon the cheek,

'Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,
And number'd bead, and shrift,
Bluff Harry broke into the spence,
And turn'd the cowls adrift:

'And I have seen some score of those
Fresh faces, that would thrive
When his man-minded offset rose
To chase the deer at five;

'And all that from the town would stroll,
Till that wild wind made work
In which the gloomy brewer's soul
Went by me, like a stork:

'The slight she-slips of loyal blood,
And others, passing praise,
Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud
For puritanic stays:

'And I have shadow'd many a group
Of beauties, that were born
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,
Or while the patch was worn;

'And, leg and arm with love-knots gay,
About me leap'd and laugh'd
The modish Cupid of the day,
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

'I swear (and else may insects prick
Each leaf into a gall)
This girl, for whom your heart is sick,
Is three times worth them all;

'For those and theirs, by Nature's law,
Have faded long ago;
But in these latter springs I saw
Your own Olivia blow,

'From when she gamboll'd on the greens,
A baby-germ, to when
The maiden blossoms of her teens
Could number five from ten.

'I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,
(And hear me with thine ears,)
That, tho' I circle in the grain
Five hundred rings of years—

'Yet, since I first could cast a shade,
Did never creature pass
So slightly, musically made,
So light upon the grass:

'For as to fairies, that will flit
To make the greensward fresh,
I hold them exquisitely knit,
But far too spare of flesh.'

Oh, hide thy knotted knees in fern,
And overlook the chace;
And from thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Sumner-place.

But thou, whereon I carved her name,
That oft hast heard my vows,
Declare when last Olivia came
To sport beneath thy boughs.

'O yesterday, you know, the fair
Was holden at the town;
Her father left his good arm-chair,
And rode his hunter down.

'And with him Albert came on his.
I look'd at him with joy:
As cowslip unto oxlip is,
So seems she to the boy.

'An hour had past—and, sitting straight
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,
Her mother trundled to the gate
Behind the dappled grays.

'But, as for her, she stay'd at home,
And on the roof she went,
And down the way you use to come,
She look'd with discontent.

'She left the novel half-uncut
Upon the rosewood shelf;
She left the new piano shut:
She could not please herself.

'Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,
And livelier than a lark
She sent her voice thro' all the holt
Before her, and the park.

'A light wind chased her on the wing,
And in the chase grew wild,
As close as might be would he cling
About the darling child:

'But light as any wind that blows
So fleetly did she stir,
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and rose,
And turn'd to look at her.

'And here she came, and round me play'd,
And sang to me the whole
Of those three stanzas that you made
About my "giant bole";

'And in a fit of frolic mirth
She strove to span my waist:
Alas, I was so broad of girth,
I could not be embraced.

'I wish'd myself the fair young beech
That here beside me stands,
That round me, clasping each in each,
She might have lock'd her hands.

'Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as sweet
As woodbine's fragile hold,
Or when I feel about my feet
The berried briony fold.'

O muffle round thy knees with fern,
And shadow Sumner-chace!
Long may thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Sumner-place!

But tell me, did she read the name
I carved with many vows
When last with throbbing heart I came
To rest beneath thy boughs?

'O yes, she wander'd round and round
These knotted knees of mine,
And found, and kiss'd the name she found
And sweetly murmur'd thine.

'A teardrop trembled from its source,
And down my surface crept.
My sense of touch is something coarse,
But I believe she wept.

'Then flush'd her cheek with rosy light,
She glanced across the plain;
But not a creature was in sight:
She kiss'd me once again.

'Her kisses were so close and kind,
That, trust me on my word,
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,
But yet my sap was stirr'd:

'And even into my inmost ring
A pleasure I discern'd,
Like those blind motions of the Spring,
That show the year is turn'd.

'Thrice-happy he that may caress
The ringlet's waving balm—
The cushions of whose touch may press
The maiden's tender palm.

'I, rooted here among the groves,
But languidly adjust
My vapid vegetable loves
With anthers and with dust:

'For ah! my friend, the days were brief
Whereof the poets talk,
When that, which breathes within the leaf,
Could slip its bark and walk.

'But could I, as in times foregone,
From spray, and branch, and stem,
Have suck'd and gather'd into one
The life that spreads in them,

'She had not found me so remiss;
But lightly issuing thro',
I would have paid her kiss for kiss
With usury thereto.'

O flourish high, with leafy towers,
And overlook the lea,
Pursue thy loves among the bowers,
But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,
Old oak, I love thee well;
A thousand thanks for what I learn
And what remains to tell.

''Tis little more: the day was warm;
At last, tired out with play,
She sank her head upon her arm,
And at my feet she lay.

'Her eyelids dropp'd their silken eaves.
I breathed upon her eyes
Thro' all the summer of my leaves
A welcome mix'd with sighs.

'I took the swarming sound of life—
The music from the town—
The murmurs of the drum and fife
And lull'd them in my own.

'Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,
To light her shaded eye;
A second flutter'd round her lip
Like a golden butterfly;

'A third would glimmer on her neck
To make the necklace shine;
Another slid, a sunny fleck,
From head to ankle fine,

'Then close and dark my arms I spread,
And shadow'd all her rest—
Dropt dews upon her golden head,
An acorn in her breast.

'But in a pet she started up,
And pluck'd it out, and drew
My little oakling from the cup,
And flung him in the dew.

'And yet it was a graceful gift—
I felt a pang within
As when I see the woodman lift
His axe to slay my kin.

'I shook him down because he was
The finest on the tree,
He lies beside thee on the grass.
O kiss him once for me.

'O kiss him twice and thrice for me,
That have no lips to kiss,
For never yet was oak on lea
Shall grow so fair as this.'

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,
Look further thro' the chace,
Spread upward till thy boughs discern
The front of Sumner-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,
That but a moment lay
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest
Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,
The warmth it thence shall win
To riper life may magnetize
The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms overset,
Or lapse from hand to hand,
Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet
Thine acorn in the land.

May never saw dismember thee
Nor wielded axe disjoint,
That art the fairest-spoken tree
From here to Lizard-point.

O rock upon thy towery top
All throats that gurgle sweet!
All starry culmination drop
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet!

All grass of silky feather grow—
And while he sinks or swells
The full south-breeze around thee blow
The sound of minster bells.

The fat earth feed thy branchy root,
That under deeply strikes!
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,
High up, in silver spikes!

Nor ever lightning char thy grain,
But, rolling as in sleep,
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,
That makes thee broad and deep!

And hear me swear a solemn oath,
That only by thy side
Will I to Olive plight my troth,
And gain her for my bride.

And when my marriage morn may fall,
She, Dryad-like, shall wear
Alternate leaf and acorn-ball
In wreath about her hair.

And I will work in prose and rhyme,
And praise thee more in both
Than bard has honour'd beech or lime,
Or that Thessalian growth,

In which the swarthy ringdove sat,
And mystic sentence spoke;
And more than England honours that,
Thy famous brother-oak,

Wherein the younger Charles abode
Till all the paths were dim,
And far below the Roundhead rode,
And humm'd a surly hymn.

LOVE AND DUTY

Or love that never found his earthly close,
What sequel? Streaming eyes and breaking hearts?
Or all the same as if he had not been?
Not so. Shall Error in the round of time
Still father Truth? O shall the braggart shout
For some blind glimpse of freedom work itself
Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to law
System and empire? Sin itself be found
The cloudy porch oft opening on the Sun?
And only he, this wonder, dead, become
Mere highway dust? or year by year alone
Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,
Nightmare of youth, the spectre of himself?
If this were thus, if this, indeed, were all,
Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,
The staring eye glazed o'er with sapless days,
The long mechanic pacings to and fro,
The set grey life, and apathetic end.
But am I not the nobler thro' thy love?
O three times less unworthy! likewise thou
Art more thro' Love, and greater than thy years.
The Sun will run his orbit, and the Moon
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself will bring
The drooping flower of knowledge changed to fruit
Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large in Time,
And that which shapes it to some perfect end.
Will some one say, then why not ill for good?
Why took ye not your pastime? To that man
My work shall answer, since I knew the right
And did it; for a man is not as God,
But then most Godlike being most a man.
—So let me think 'tis well for thee and me—

Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine
Whose foresight preaches peace, my heart so slow
To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to me,
When eyes, love-languid thro' half-tears, would dwell
One earnest, earnest moment upon mine,
Then not to dare to see! when thy low voice,
Faltering, would break its syllables, to keep
My own full-tuned,—hold passion in a leash,
And not leap forth and fall about thy neck,
And on thy bosom, (deep-desired relief!)
Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that weigh'd
Upon my brain, my senses and my soul!
For Love himself took part against himself
To warn us off, and Duty loved of Love—
O this world's curse,—beloved but hated—came
Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace and mine,
And crying, 'Who is this? behold thy bride,'
She push'd me from thee.
If the sense is hard
To alien ears, I did not speak to these—
No, not to thee, but to thyself in me:
Hard is my doom and thine: thou knowest it all.
Could Love part thus? was it not well to speak,
To have spoken once? It could not but be well.
The slow sweet hours that bring us all things good,
The slow sad hours that bring us all things ill,
And all good things from evil, brought the night
In which we sat together and alone,
And to the want, that hollow'd all the heart,
Gave utterance by the yearning of an eye,
That burn'd upon its object thro' such tears
As flow but once a life.
The trance gave way
To those caresses, when a hundred times
In that last kiss, which never was the last,
Farewell, like endless welcome, lived and died.
Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and the words
That make a man feel strong in speaking truth;
Till now the dark was worn, and overhead
The lights of sunset and of sunrise mix'd
In that brief night; the summer night, that paused
Among her stars to hear us; stars that hung

Love-charm'd to listen: all the wheels of Time
Spun round in station, but the end had come.
O then like those, who clench their nerves to rush
Upon their dissolution, we two rose,
There—closing like an individual life—
In one blind cry of passion and of pain,
Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,
Caught up the whole of love and utter'd it,
And bade adieu for ever.
Live—yet live—
Shall sharpest pathos blight us, knowing all
Life needs for life is possible to will—
Live happy; tend thy flowers; be tended by
My blessing! Should my Shadow cross thy thoughts
Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou
For calmer hours to Memory's darkest hold,
If not to be forgotten—not at once—
Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy dreams,
O might it come like one that looks content,
With quiet eyes unfaithful to the truth,
And point thee forward to a distant light,
Or seem to lift a burthen from thy heart
And leave thee freër, till thou wake refresh'd,
Then when the first low matin-chirp hath grown
Full quire, and morning driv'n her plow of pearl
Far furrowing into light the mounded rack,
Beyond the fair green field and eastern sea.

THE GOLDEN YEAR

Well, you shall have that song which Leonard wrote:
It was last summer on a tour in Wales:
Old James was with me: we that day had been
Up Snowdon; and I wish'd for Leonard there,
And found him in Llanberis: then we crost
Between the lakes, and clamber'd half way up
The counter side; and that same song of his
He told me; for I banter'd him, and swore
They said he lived shut up within himself,
A tongue-tied Poet in the feverous days,

That, setting the *how much* before the *how*,
Cry, like the daughters of the horseleech, 'Give,
Cram us with all,' but count not me the herd!
To which 'They call me what they will,' he said:
'But I was born too late: the fair new forms,
That float about the threshold of an age,
Like truths of Science waiting to be caught—
Catch me who can, and make the catcher crown'd—
Are taken by the forelock. Let it be.
But if you care indeed to listen, hear
These measured words, my work of yestermorn.
'We sleep and wake and sleep, but all things move;
The Sun flies forward to his brother Sun;
The dark Earth follows wheel'd in her ellipse;
And human things returning on themselves
Move onward, leading up the golden year.
'Ah, tho' the times, when some new thought can bud,
Are but as poets' seasons when they flower,
Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,
Have ebb and flow conditioning their march,
And slow and sure comes up the golden year.
'When wealth no more shall rest in mounded heaps,
But smit with freer light shall slowly melt
In many streams to fatten lower lands,
And light shall spread, and man be liker man
Thro' all the season of the golden year.
'Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens be wrens?
If all the world were falcons, what of that?
The wonder of the eagle were the less,
But he not less the eagle. Happy days
Roll onward, leading up the golden year.
'Fly happy happy sails and bear the Press;
Fly happy with the mission of the Cross;
Knit land to land, and blowing havenward
With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear of toll,
Enrich the markets of the golden year.
'But we grow old. Ah! when shall all men's good
Be each man's rule, and universal Peace
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
Thro' all the circle of the golden year?'
Thus far he flow'd, and ended; whereupon

'Ah, folly!' in mimic cadence answer'd James—
'Ah, folly! for it lies so far away,
Not in our time, nor in our children's time,
'Tis like the second world to us that live;
'Twere all as one to fix our hopes on Heaven
As on this vision of the golden year.'
With that he struck his staff against the rocks
And broke it,—James, you know him,—old, but full
Of force and choler, and firm upon his feet,
And like an oaken stock in winter woods,
O'erflourish'd with the hoary clematis:
Then added, all in heat:
'What stuff is this!
Old writers push'd the happy season back,—
The more fools they,—we forward: dreamers both:
You most, that in an age, when every hour
Must sweat her sixty minutes to the death,
Live on, God love us, as if the seedsman, rapt
Upon the teeming harvest, should not dip
His hand into the bag: but well I know
That unto him who works, and feels he works,
This same grand year is ever at the doors.'
He spoke; and, high above, I heard them blast
The steep slate-quarry, and the great echo flap
And buffet round the hills from bluff to bluff.

ULYSSES

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;

For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life. Life pil'd on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this grey spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,

Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

LOCKSLEY HALL

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn:
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed:

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see;
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.——

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove;
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, 'My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee.'

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a colour and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, 'I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong;'
Saying, 'Dost thou love me, cousin?' weeping, 'I have loved thee long.'

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fullness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy?—having known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought:
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and move:
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No—she never loved me truly: love is love for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the 'Never, never,' whisper'd by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

'They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffer'd'—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these ?
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy : what is that which I should do ?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honour feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness ? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age !

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life ;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn ;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men ;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd, ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint,
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creeping on from point to point:

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's ?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn :

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string ?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! woman's pleasure, woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd;—
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing-space;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are wild,
But I count the grey barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime ?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range.
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day :
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun :
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun—

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

GODIVA

I waited for the train at Coventry;
I hung with grooms and porters on the bridge,
To watch the three tall spires; and there I shaped
The city's ancient legend into this:—

Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down the past, not only we, that prate
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the people well,
And loathed to see them overtax'd; but she
Did more, and underwent, and overcame,
The woman of a thousand summers back,
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who ruled
In Coventry: for when he laid a tax
Upon his town, and all the mothers brought
Their children, clamouring, 'If we pay, we starve!
She sought her lord, and found him, where he strode
About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
His beard a foot before him, and his hair
A yard behind. She told him of their tears,
And pray'd him, 'If they pay this tax, they starve.'
Whereat he stared, replying, half-amazed,
'You would not let your little finger ache
For such as *these?*'—'But I would die,' said she.
He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by Paul:
Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear;
'O aye, aye, aye, you talk!'—'Alas!' she said,
'But prove me what it is I would not do.'
And from a heart as rough as Esau's hand,

He answer'd, 'Ride you naked thro' the town,
And I repeal it;' and nodding, as in scorn,
He parted, with great strides among his dogs.
So left alone, the passions of her mind,
As winds from all the compass shift and blow,
Made war upon each other for an hour,
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,
And bad him cry, with sound of trumpet, all
The hard condition; but that she would loose
The people: therefore, as they loved her well,
From then till noon no foot should pace the street,
No eye look down, she passing; but that all
Should keep within, door shut, and window barr'd.
Then fled she to her inmost bower, and there
Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her belt,
The grim Earl's gift; but ever at a breath
She linger'd, looking like a summer moon
Half-dipt in cloud: anon she shook her head,
And shower'd the rippled ringlets to her knee;
Unclad herself in haste; adown the stair
Stole on; and, like a creeping sunbeam, slid
From pillar unto pillar, until she reach'd
The gateway; there she found her palfrey trapt
In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.
Then she rode forth, clothed on with chastity:
The deep air listen'd round her as she rode,
And all the low wind hardly breathed for fear.
The little wide-mouth'd heads upon the spout
Had cunning eyes to see: the barking cur
Made her cheek flame: her palfrey's footfall shot
Light horrors thro' her pulses: the blind walls
Were full of chinks and holes; and overhead
Fantastic gables, crowding, stared: but she
Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she saw
The white-flower'd elder-thicket from the field
Gleam thro' the Gothic archways in the wall.
Then she rode back, clothed on with chastity:
And one low churl, compact of thankless earth,
The fatal byword of all years to come,
Boring a little augur-hole in fear,
Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had their will,
Were shrivell'd into darkness in his head,

And dropt before him. So the Powers, who wait
On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense misused;
And she, that knew not, pass'd: and all at once,
With twelve great shocks of sound, the shameless noon
Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hundred towers,
One after one: but even then she gain'd
Her bower; whence reissuing, robed and crown'd,
To meet her lord, she took the tax away,
And built herself an everlasting name.

THE TWO VOICES

A STILL small voice spake unto me,
'Thou art so full of misery,
Were it not better not to be?'

Then to the still small voice I said:
'Let me not cast in endless shade
What is so wonderfully made.'

To which the voice did urge reply:
'To-day I saw the dragon-fly
Come from the wells where he did lie.

'An inner impulse rent the veil
Of his old husk: from head to tail
Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

'He dried his wings: like gauze they grew:
Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew
A living flash of light he flew.'

I said, 'When first the world began,
Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,
And in the sixth she moulded man.

'She gave him mind, the lordliest
Proportion, and, above the rest,
Dominion in the head and breast.'

Thereto the silent voice replied:
'Self-blinded are you by your pride:
Look up thro' night: the world is wide.

'This truth within thy mind rehearse,
That in a boundless universe
Is boundless better, boundless worse.

'Think you this mould of hopes and fears
Could find no statelier than his peers
In yonder hundred million spheres?'

It spake, moreover, in my mind:
'Tho' thou wert scatter'd to the wind,
Yet is there plenty of the kind.'

Then did my response clearer fall:
'No compound of this earthly ball
Is like another, all in all.'

To which he answer'd scoffingly:
'Good soul! suppose I grant it thee,
Who'll weep for thy deficiency?

'Or will one beam be less intense,
When thy peculiar difference
Is cancell'd in the world of sense?'

I would have said, 'Thou canst not know,'
But my full heart, that work'd below,
Rain'd thro' my sight its overflow.

Again the voice spake unto me:
'Thou art so steep'd in misery,
Surely 'twere better not to be.

'Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,
Nor any train of reason keep:
Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep.'

I said, 'The years with change advance:
If I make dark my countenance,
I shut my life from happier chance.

'Some turn this sickness yet might take,
Ev'n yet.' But he: 'What drug can make
A wither'd palsy cease to shake?'

I wept, 'Tho' I should die, I know
That all about the thorn will blow
In tufts of rosy-tinted snow;

'And men, thro' novel spheres of thought
Still moving after truth long sought,
Will learn new things when I am not.'

'Yet,' said the secret voice, 'some time,
Sooner or later, will grey prime
Make thy grass hoar with early rime.

'Not less swift souls that yearn for light,
Rapt after heaven's starry flight,
Would sweep the tracts of day and night.

'Not less the bee would range her cells,
The furzy prickle fire the dells,
The foxglove cluster dappled bells.'

I said that 'all the years invent;
Each month is various to present
The world with some development.

'Were this not well, to bide mine hour,
Tho' watching from a ruin'd tower
How grows the day of human power?'

'The highest-mounted mind,' he said,
'Still sees the sacred morning spread
The silent summit overhead.

'Will thirty seasons render plain
Those lonely lights that still remain,
Just breaking over land and main?

'Or make that morn, from his cold crown
And crystal silence creeping down,
Flood with full daylight glebe and town?

'Forerun thy peers, thy time, and let
Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set
In midst of knowledge, dream'd not yet.

'Thou hast not gain'd a real height,
Nor art thou nearer to the light,
Because the scale is infinite.

''Twere better not to breathe or speak,
Than cry for strength, remaining weak,
And seem to find, but still to seek.

'Moreover,' but to seem to find
Asks what thou lackest, thought resign'd,
A healthy frame, a quiet mind.'

I said, 'When I am gone away,
"He dared not tarry," men will say,
Doing dishonour to my clay.'

'This is more vile,' he made reply,
'To breathe and loathe, to live and sigh,
Than once from dread of pain to die.

'Sick art thou—a divided will
Still heaping on the fear of ill
The fear of men, a coward still.

'Do men love thee? Art thou so bound
To men, that how thy name may sound
Will vex thee lying underground?

'The memory of the wither'd leaf
In endless time is scarce more brief
Than of the garner'd Autumn-sheaf.

'Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust;
The right ear, that is fill'd with dust,
Hears little of the false or just.'

'Hard task, to pluck resolve,' I cried,
'From emptiness and the waste wide
Of that abyss, or scornful pride!

'Nay—rather yet that I could raise
One hope that warm'd me in the days
While still I yearn'd for human praise.

'When, wide in soul and bold of tongue,
Among the tents I paused and sung,
The distant battle flash'd and rung.

'I sung the joyful Paean clear,
And, sitting, burnish'd without fear
The brand, the buckler, and the spear—

'Waiting to strive a happy strife,
To war with falsehood to the knife,
And not to lose the good of life—

'Some hidden principle to move,
To put together, part and prove,
And mete the bounds of hate and love—

'As far as might be, to carve out
Free space for every human doubt,
That the whole mind might orb about—

'To search thro' all I felt or saw,
The springs of life, the depths of awe,
And reach the law within the law:

'At least, not rotting like a weed,
But, having sown some generous seed,
Fruitful of further thought and deed,

'To pass, when Life her light withdraws,
Not void of righteous self-applause,
Nor in a merely selfish cause—

'In some good cause, not in mine own,
To perish, wept for, honour'd, known,
And like a warrior overthrown;

'Whose eyes are dim with glorious tears,
When, soil'd with noble dust, he hears
His country's war-song thrill his ears:

'Then dying of a mortal stroke,
What time the foeman's line is broke,
And all the war is roll'd in smoke.'

'Yea!' said the voice, 'thy dream was good,
While thou abodest in the bud.
It was the stirring of the blood.

'If Nature put not forth her power
About the opening of the flower,
Who is it that could live an hour?

'Then comes the check, the change, the fall.
Pain rises up, old pleasures pall.
There is one remedy for all.

'Yet hadst thou, thro' enduring pain,
Link'd month to month with such a chain
Of knitted purport, all were vain.

'Thou hadst not between death and birth
Dissolved the riddle of the earth.
So were thy labour little-worth.

'That men with knowledge merely play'd,
I told thee—hardly nigher made,
Tho' scaling slow from grade to grade;

'Much less this dreamer, deaf and blind,
Named man, may hope some truth to find,
That bears relation to the mind.

'For every worm beneath the moon
Draws different threads, and late and soon
Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

'Cry, faint not: either Truth is born
Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,
Or in the gateways of the morn.

'Cry, faint not, climb: the summits slope
Beyond the furthest flights of hope,
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.

'Sometimes a little corner shines,
As over rainy mist inclines
A gleaming crag with belts of pines.

'I will go forward, sayest thou,
I shall not fail to find her now.
Look up, the fold is on her brow.

'If straight thy track, or if oblique,
Thou know'st not. Shadows thou dost strike,
Embracing cloud, Ixion-like;

'And owning but a little more
Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,
Calling thyself a little lower

'Than angels. Cease to wail and brawl!
Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?
There is one remedy for all.'

'O dull, one-sided voice,' said I,
'Wilt thou make everything a lie,
To flatter me that I may die?

'I know that age to age succeeds,
Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,
A dust of systems and of creeds.

'I cannot hide that some have striven,
Achieving calm, to whom was given
The joy that mixes man with Heaven:

'Who, rowing hard against the stream,
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,
And did not dream it was a dream;

'But heard, by secret transport led,
Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,
The murmur of the fountain-head—

'Which did accomplish their desire,
Bore and forbore, and did not tire,
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

'He heeded not reviling tones,
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,
Tho' cursed and scorned, and bruised with stones:

'But looking upward, full of grace,
He pray'd, and from a happy place
God's glory smote him on the face.'

The sullen answer slid betwixt:
'Not that the grounds of hope were fix'd,
The elements were kindlier mix'd.'

I said, 'I toil beneath the curse,
But, knowing not the universe,
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

'And that, in seeking to undo
One riddle, and to find the true,
I knit a hundred others new:

'Or that this anguish fleeting hence,
Unmanacled from bonds of sense,
Be fix'd and froz'n to permanence:

'For I go, weak from suffering here;
Naked I go, and void of cheer:
What is it that I may not fear?'

'Consider well,' the voice replied,
'His face, that two hours since hath died;
Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride?

'Will he obey when one commands?
Or answer should one press his hands?
He answers not, nor understands.

'His palms are folded on his breast:
There is no other thing express'd
But long disquiet merged in rest.

'His lips are very mild and meek:
Tho' one should smite him on the cheek,
And on the mouth, he will not speak.

'His little daughter, whose sweet face
He kiss'd, taking his last embrace,
Becomes dishonour to her race—

'His sons grow up that bear his name,
Some grow to honour, some to shame,—
But he is chill to praise or blame.

'He will not hear the north-wind rave,
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave
From winter rains that beat his grave.

'High up the vapours fold and swim:
About him broods the twilight dim:
The place he knew forgetteth him.'

'If all be dark, vague voice,' I said,
'These things are wrapt in doubt and dread,
Nor canst thou show the dead are dead.

'The sap dries up: the plant declines.
A deeper tale my heart divines.
Know I not Death? the outward signs?

'I found him when my years were few;
A shadow on the graves I knew,
And darkness in the village yew.

'From grave to grave the shadow crept:
In her still place the morning wept:
Touch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

'The simple senses crown'd his head:
"Omega! thou art Lord," they said,
"We find no motion in the dead."

'Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,
Should that plain fact, as taught by these,
Not make him sure that he shall cease?

'Who forged that other influence,
That heat of inward evidence,
By which he doubts against the sense?

'He owns the fatal gift of eyes,
That read his spirit blindly wise,
Not simple as a thing that dies.

'Here sits he shaping wings to fly:
His heart forebodes a mystery:
He names the name Eternity.

'That type of Perfect in his mind
In Nature can he nowhere find.
He sows himself on every wind.

'He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,
And thro' thick veils to apprehend
A labour working to an end.

'The end and the beginning vex
His reason: many things perplex,
With motions, checks, and counterchecks.

'He knows a baseness in his blood
At such strange war with something good,
He may not do the thing he would.

'Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,
Vast images in glimmering dawn,
Half shown, are broken and withdrawn.

'Ah! sure within him and without,
Could his dark wisdom find it out,
There must be answer to his doubt.

'But thou canst answer not again.
With thine own weapon art thou slain,
Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

'The doubt would rest, I dare not solve.
In the same circle we revolve.
Assurance only breeds resolve.'

As when a billow, blown against,
Falls back, the voice with which I fenced
A little ceased, but recommenced.

'Where wert thou when thy father play'd
In his free field, and pastime made,
A merry boy in sun and shade?

'A merry boy they called him then.
He sat upon the knees of men
In days that never come again.

'Before the little ducts began
To feed thy bones with lime, and ran
Their course, till thou wert also man:

'Who took a wife, who rear'd his race,
Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,
Whose troubles number with his days:

'A life of nothings, nothing-worth,
From that first nothing ere his birth
To that last nothing under earth!'

'These words,' I said, 'are like the rest,
No certain clearness, but at best
A vague suspicion of the breast:

'But if I grant, thou might'st defend
The thesis which thy words intend—
That to begin implies to end;

'Yet how should I for certain hold,
Because my memory is so cold,
That I first was in human mould?

'I cannot make this matter plain,
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,
A random arrow from the brain.

'It may be that no life is found,
Which only to one engine bound
Falls off, but cycles always round.

'As old mythologies relate,
Some draught of Lethe might await
The slipping thro' from state to state.

'As here we find in trances, men
Forget the dream that happens then,
Until they fall in trance again.

'So might we, if our state were such
As one before, remember much,
For those two likes might meet and touch.

'But, if I lapsed from nobler place,
Some legend of a fallen race
Alone might hint of my disgrace;

'Some vague emotion of delight
In gazing up an Alpine height,
Some yearning toward the lamps of night.

'Or if thro' lower lives I came—
Tho' all experience past became
Consolidate in mind and frame—

'I might forget my weaker lot;
For is not our first year forgot?
The haunts of memory echo not.

'And men, whose reason long was blind,
From cells of madness unconfined,
Oft lose whole years of darker mind.

'Much more, if first I floated free,
As naked essence, must I be
Incompetent of memory:

'For memory dealing but with time,
And he with matter, could she climb
Beyond her own material prime?

'Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—

'Of something felt, like something here;
Of something done, I know not where;
Such as no language may declare.'

The still voice laugh'd. 'I talk,' said he,
'Not with thy dreams. Suffice it thee
Thy pain is a reality.'

'But thou,' said I, 'hast miss'd thy mark,
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark,
By making all the horizon dark.

'Why not set forth, if I should do
This rashness, that which might ensue
With this old soul in organs new?

'Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly long'd for death.

''Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
Oh life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that I want.'

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,
'Behold, it is the Sabbath morn.'

And I arose, and I released
The casement, and the light increased
With freshness in the dawning east.

Like soften'd airs that blowing steal,
When meres begin to uncongeal,
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest:
Passing the place where each must rest,
Each enter'd like a welcome guest.

One walk'd between his wife and child,
With measur'd footfall firm and mild,
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good,
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,
The little maiden walk'd demure,
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.

These three made unity so sweet,
My frozen heart began to beat,
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wander'd on:
I spoke, but answer came there none:
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,
A little whisper silver-clear,
A murmur, 'Be of better cheer.'

As from some blissful neighbourhood,
A notice faintly understood,
'I see the end, and know the good.'

A little hint to solace woe,
A hint, a whisper breathing low,
'I may not speak of what I know.'

Like an Aeolian harp that wakes
No certain air, but overtakes
Far thought with music that it makes:

Such seem'd the whisper at my side:
'What is it thou knowest, sweet voice?' I cried.
'A hidden hope,' the voice replied:

So heavenly-toned, that in that hour
From out my sullen heart a power
Broke, like the rainbow from the shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,
That every cloud, that spreads above
And veileth love, itself is love.

And forth into the fields I went,
And Nature's living motion lent
The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wonder'd at the bounteous hours,
The slow result of winter showers:
You scarce could see the grass for flowers.

I wonder'd, while I paced along:
The woods were fill'd so full with song,
There seem'd no room for sense of wrong.

So variously seem'd all things wrought,
I marvell'd how the mind was brought
To anchor by one gloomy thought;

And wherefore rather I made choice
To commune with that barren voice,
Than him that said, 'Rejoice! rejoice!'

THE DAY-DREAM

PROLOGUE

O Lady Flora, let me speak:
A pleasant hour has past away
While, dreaming on your damask cheek,
The dewy sister-eyelids lay.
As by the lattice you reclined,
I went thro' many wayward moods
To see you dreaming—and, behind,
A summer crisp with shining woods.
And I too dream'd, until at last
Across my fancy, brooding warm,
The reflex of a legend past,
And loosely settled into form.
And would you have the thought I had,
And see the vision that I saw,
Then take the broidery-frame, and add
A crimson to the quaint Macaw,
And I will tell it. Turn your face,
Nor look with that too-earnest eye—
The rhymes are dazzled from their place,
And order'd words asunder fly.

THE SLEEPING PALACE

I

THE varying year with blade and sheaf
 Clothes and reclothes the happy plains;
Here rests the sap within the leaf,
 Here stays the blood along the veins.
Faint shadows, vapours lightly curl'd,
 Faint murmurs from the meadows come,
Like hints and echoes of the world
 To spirits folded in the womb.

II

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
 On every slanting terrace-lawn.
The fountain to his place returns
 Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.
Here droops the banner on the tower,
 On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
The peacock in his laurel bower,
 The parrot in his gilded wires.

III

Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs:
 In these, in those the life is stay'd.
The mantles from the golden pegs
 Droop sleepily: no sound is made,
Not even of a gnat that sings.
 More like a picture seemeth all
Than those old portraits of old kings,
 That watch the sleepers from the wall.

IV

Here sits the Butler with a flask
 Between his knees, half-drain'd; and there
The wrinkled steward at his task,
 The maid-of-honour blooming fair:
The page has caught her hand in his:
 Her lips are sever'd as to speak:
His own are pouted to a kiss:
 The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

V

Till all the hundred summers pass,
The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,
Make prisms in every carven glass,
And beaker brimm'd with noble wine.
Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
His state the king reposing keeps.
He must have been a jovial king.

VI

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
At distance like a little wood;
Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
And grapes with bunches red as blood;
All creeping plants, a wall of green
Close-matted, bur and brake and briar,
And glimpsing over these, just seen,
High up, the topmost palace-spire.

VII

When will the hundred summers die,
And thought and time be born again,
And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
Bring truth that sways the soul of men?
Here all things in their place remain,
As all were order'd, ages since.
Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and Pain,
And bring the fated fairy Prince.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

I

YEAR after year unto her feet,
She lying on her couch alone,
Across the purpled coverlet,
The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
On either side her tranced form
Forth streaming from a braid of pearl:
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
And moves not on the rounded curl.

II

The silk star-broider'd coverlid
Unto her limbs itself doth mould
Languidly ever; and, amid
Her full black ringlets downward roll'd,
Glows forth each softly-shadow'd arm
With bracelets of the diamond bright:
Her constant beauty doth inform
Stillness with love, and day with light.

III

She sleeps: her breathings are not heard
In palace chambers far apart.
The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd
That lie upon her charmed heart.
She sleeps: on either hand upswells
The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest:
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells
A perfect form in perfect rest.

THE ARRIVAL

I

ALL precious things, discover'd late,
To those that seek them issue forth;
For love in sequel works with fate,
And draws the veil from hidden worth.
He travels far from other skies—
His mantle glitters on the rocks—
A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,
And lighter-footed than the fox.

II

The bodies and the bones of those
That strove in other days to pass,
Are wither'd in the thorny close,
Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.
He gazes on the silent dead:
'They perish'd in their daring deeds.'
This proverb flashes thro' his head,
'The many fail: the one succeeds.'

III

He comes, scarce knowing what he seeks:
He breaks the hedge: he enters there:
The colour flies into his cheeks:
He trusts to light on something fair;
For all his life the charm did talk
About his path, and hover near
With words of promise in his walk,
And whisper'd voices at his ear.

IV

More close and close his footsteps wind;
The Magic Music in his heart
Beats quick and quicker, till he find
The quiet chamber far apart.
His spirit flutters like a lark,
He stoops—to kiss her—on his knee.
'Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
How dark those hidden eyes must be!'

THE REVIVAL

I

A TOUCH, a kiss! the charm was snapt.
There rose a noise of striking clocks,
And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
And barking dogs, and crowing cocks;
A fuller light illumined all,
A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
The butler drank, the steward scrawl'd,
The fire shot up, the martin flew,
The parrot scream'd, the peacock squall'd,
The maid and page renew'd their strife,
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and clackt,
And all the long-pent stream of life
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

III

And last with these the king awoke,
And in his chair himself uprear'd,
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and spoke,
'By holy rood, a royal beard!
How say you? we have slept, my lords.
My beard has grown into my lap.'
The barons swore, with many words,
'Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

IV

'Pardy,' return'd the king, 'but still
My joints are something stiff or so.
My lord, and shall we pass the bill
I mention'd half an hour ago?'
The chancellor, sedate and vain,
In courteous words return'd reply:
But dallied with his golden chain,
And, smiling, put the question by.

THE DEPARTURE

I

And on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went
In that new world which is the old:
Across the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
And deep into the dying day
The happy princess follow'd him.

II

'I'd sleep another hundred years,
O love, for such another kiss;'
'O wake for ever, love,' she hears,
'O love, 'twas such as this and this.'
And o'er them many a sliding star,
And many a merry wind was borne,
And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
The twilight melted into morn.

III

'O eyes long laid in happy sleep!'
'O happy sleep, that lightly fled!'
'O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep!'
'O love, thy kiss would wake the dead!'
And o'er them many a flowing range
Of vapour buoy'd the crescent-bark,
And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
The twilight died into the dark.

IV

'A hundred summers! can it be?
And whither goest thou, tell me where?'
'O seek my father's court with me,
For there are greater wonders there.'
And o'er the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

MORAL

I

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And if you find no moral there,
Go, look in any glass and say,
What moral is in being fair.
Oh, to what uses shall we put
The wildweed-flower that simply blows?
And is there any moral shut
Within the bosom of the rose?

II

But any man that walks the mead,
In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,
According as his humours lead,
A meaning suited to his mind.
And liberal applications lie
In Art like Nature, dearest friend;
So 'twere to cramp its use, if I
Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOI

I

You shake your head. A random string
 Your finer female sense offends.
Well—were it not a pleasant thing
 To fall asleep with all one's friends;
To pass with all our social ties
 To silence from the paths of men;
And every hundred years to rise
 And learn the world, and sleep again;
To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
 And wake on science grown to more,
On secrets of the brain, the stars,
 As wild as aught of fairy lore;
And all that else the years will show,
 The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
The vast Republics that may grow,
 The Federations and the Powers;
Titanic forces taking birth
 In divers seasons, divers climes;
For we are Ancients of the earth,
 And in the morning of the times.

II

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
 Thro' sunny decads new and strange,
Or gay quinquenniads would we reap
 The flower and quintessence of change.

III

Ah, yet would I—and would I might!
 So much your eyes my fancy take—
Be still the first to leap to light
 That I might kiss those eyes awake!
For, am I right or am I wrong,
 To choose your own you did not care;
You'd have *my* moral from the song,
 And I will take my pleasure there:

And, am I right or am I wrong,
My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
To search a meaning for the song,
Perforce will still revert to you;
Nor finds a closer truth than this
All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
And evermore a costly kiss
The prelude to some brighter world.

IV

For since the time when Adam first
Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
And every bird of Eden burst
In carol, every bud to flower,
What eyes, like thine, have waken'd hopes?
What lips, like thine, so sweetly join'd?
Where on the double rosebud droops
The fullness of the pensive mind;
Which all too dearly self-involved,
Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me;
A sleep by kisses undissolved,
That lets thee neither hear nor see:
But break it. In the name of wife,
And in the rights that name may give,
Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,
And that for which I care to live.

EPILOGUE

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And, if you find a meaning there,
O whisper to your glass, and say,
'What wonder, if he thinks me fair?'
What wonder I, was all unwise,
To shape the song for your delight
Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise,
That float thro' Heaven, and cannot light?
Or old-world trains, upheld at court
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue—
But take it—earnest wed with sport,
And either sacred unto you.

AMPHION

My father left a park to me,
But it is wild and barren,
A garden too with scarce a tree
And waster than a warren:
Yet say the neighbours when they call,
It is not bad but good land,
And in it is the germ of all
That grows within the woodland.

O had I lived when song was great
In days of old Amphion,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
Nor cared for seed or scion!
And had I lived when song was great,
And legs of trees were limber,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
And fiddled in the timber!

'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,
Such happy intonation,
Wherever he sat down and sung
He left a small plantation;
Wherever in a lonely grove
He set up his forlorn pipes,
The gouty oak began to move,
And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,
And, as tradition teaches,
Young ashes pirouetted down
Coquetting with young beeches;
And briony-vine and ivy-wreath
Ran forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
Came little copses climbing.

The linden broke her ranks and rent
 The woodbine wreaths that bind her,
And down the middle, buzz! she went
 With all her bees behind her:
The poplars, in long order due,
 With cypress promenaded,
The shock-head willows two and two
 By rivers gallopaded.

Came wet-shot alder from the wave,
 Came yews, a dismal coterie;
Each pluck'd his one foot from the grave,
 Possetting with a sloe-tree:
Old elms came breaking from the vine,
 The vine stream'd out to follow,
And, sweating rosin, plump'd the pine
 From many a cloudy hollow.

And wasn't it a sight to see,
 When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,
 The country-side descended;
And shepherds from the mountain-eaves
 Look'd down, half-pleased, half-frighten'd,
As dash'd about the drunken leaves
 The random sunshine lighten'd!

Oh, nature first was fresh to men,
 And wanton without measure;
So youthful and so flexile then,
 You moved her at your pleasure.
Twang out, my fiddle! shake the twigs!
 And make her dance attendance;
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set sprigs,
 And scirrhous roots and tendons.

'Tis vain! in such a brassy age
 I could not move a thistle;
The very sparrows in the hedge
 Scarce answer to my whistle;

Or at the most, when three-parts-sick
With strumming and with scraping,
A jackass heehaws from the rick,
The passive oxen gaping.

But what is that I hear? a sound
Like sleepy counsel pleading:
O Lord!—'tis in my neighbour's ground,
The modern Muses reading.
They read Botanic Treatises,
And Works on Gardening thro' there,
And Methods of transplanting trees,
To look as if they grew there.

The wither'd Misses! how they prose
O'er books of travell'd seamen,
And show you slips of all that grows
From England to Van Diemen.
They read in arbours clipt and cut,
And alleys, faded places,
By squares of tropic summer shut
And warm'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,
Are neither green nor sappy;
Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,
The spindlings look unhappy.
Better to me the meanest weed
That blows upon its mountain,
The vilest herb that runs to seed
Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' months of toil,
And years of cultivation,
Upon my proper patch of soil
To grow my own plantation.
I'll take the showers as they fall,
I will not vex my bosom:
Enough if at the end of all
A little garden blossom.

ST. AGNES' EVE

Deep on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon:
My breath to heaven like vapour goes:
May my soul follow soon!
The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord:
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
To yonder shining ground;
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
To yonder argent round;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
My spirit before Thee;
So in mine earthly house I am,
To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,
Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors;
The flashes come and go;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
And strows her lights below,
And deepens on and up! the gates
Roll back, and far within
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
To make me pure of sin.
The sabbaths of Eternity,
One sabbath deep and wide—
A light upon the shining sea—
The Bridegroom with his bride!

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel:
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favours fall!
For them I battle till the end,
 To save from shame and thrall:
But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine:
I never felt the kiss of love,
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
 A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
 I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
 I hear a voice, but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
 The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
 And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.
A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, spins from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.

Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
'O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near.'
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

EDWARD GRAY

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder town
Met me walking on yonder way,
'And have you lost your heart?' she said;
'And are you married yet, Edward Gray?'

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me:
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away:
'Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more
Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

'Ellen Adair she loved me well,
Against her father's and mother's will:
To-day I sat for an hour and wept,
By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

'Shy she was, and I thought her cold;
Thought her proud, and fled over the sea;
Fill'd I was with folly and spite,
When Ellen Adair was dying for me.

'Cruel, cruel the words I said!
Cruelly came they back to-day:
"You're too slight and fickle," I said,
"To trouble the heart of Edward Gray."

'There I put my face in the grass—
Whisper'd, "Listen to my despair:
I repent me of all I did:
Speak a little, Ellen Adair!"

'Then I took a pencil, and wrote
On the mossy stone, as I lay,
"Here lies the body of Ellen Adair;
And here the heart of Edward Gray!"

'Love may come, and love may go,
And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree:
But I will love no more, no more,
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

'Bitterly wept I over the stone:
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away:
There lies the body of Ellen Adair!
And there the heart of Edward Gray!'

WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL MONOLOGUE

MADE AT THE COCK

O PLUMP head-waiter at The Cock,
To which I most resort,
How goes the time? 'Tis five o'clock.
Go fetch a pint of port:
But let it not be such as that
You set before chance-comers,
But such whose father-grape grew fat
On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,
But may she still be kind,
And whisper lovely words, and use
Her influence on the mind,
To make me write my random rhymes,
Ere they be half-forgotten;
Nor add and alter, many times,
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips
Her laurel in the wine,
And lays it thrice upon my lips,
These favour'd lips of mine;
Until the charm have power to make
New lifeblood warm the bosom,
And barren commonplaces break
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board;
Her gradual fingers steal
And touch upon the master-chord
Of all I felt and feel.
Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,
And phantom hopes assemble;
And that child's heart within the man's
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns
By many pleasant ways,
Against its fountain upward runs
The current of my days:
I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd;
The gas-light wavers dimmer;
And softly, thro' a vinous mist,
My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,
Unboding critic-pen,
Or that eternal want of pence,
Which vexes public men,
Who hold their hands to all, and cry
For that which all deny them—
Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry,
And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,
Tho' fortune clip my wings,
I will not cramp my heart, nor take
Half-views of men and things.
Let Whig and Tory stir their blood;
There must be stormy weather;
But for some true result of good
All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes;
If old things, there are new;
Ten thousand broken lights and shapes,
Yet glimpses of the true.
Let raffs be rife in prose and rhyme,
We lack not rhymes and reasons,
As on this whirligig of Time
We circle with the seasons.

This earth is rich in man and maid;
With fair horizons bound:
This whole wide earth of light and shade
Comes out, a perfect round.
High over roaring Temple-bar,
And, set in Heaven's third story,
I look at all things as they are,
But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honour'd by the guest
Half-mused, or reeling-ripe,
The pint, you brought me, was the best
That ever came from pipe.
But tho' the part surpasses praise,
My nerves have dealt with stiffer.
Is there some magic in the place?
Or do my peptics differ?

For since I came to live and learn,
No pint of white or red
Had ever half the power to turn
This wheel within my head,
Which bears a season'd brain about,
Unsubject to confusion,
Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out,
Thro' every convolution.

For I am of a numerous house,
With many kinsmen gay,
Where long and largely we carouse
As who shall say me nay:
Each month, a birth-day coming on,
We drink, defying trouble,
Or sometimes two would meet in one,
And then we drank it double;

Whether the vintage, yet unkept,
Had relish fiery-new,
Or, elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,
As old as Waterloo;
Or stow'd (when classic Canning died)
In musty bins and chambers,
Had cast upon its crusty side
The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is!
She answer'd to my call,
She changes with that mood or this,
Is all-in-all to all:
She lit the spark within my throat,
To make my blood run quicker,
Used all her fiery will, and smote
Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about
The waiter's hands, that reach
To each his perfect pint of stout,
His proper chop to each.
He looks not like the common breed
That with the napkin dally;
I think he came like Ganymede,
From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg
Than modern poultry drop,
Stept forward on a firmer leg,
And cramm'd a plumper crop;
Upon an ampler dunghill trod,
Crow'd lustier late and early,
Sipt wine from silver, praising God,
And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,
Till in a court he saw
A something-pottle-bodied boy,
That knuckled at the taw:
He stoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and good,
Flew over roof and casement:
His brothers of the weather stood
Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorpe and spire,
And follow'd with acclaims,
A sign to many a staring shire,
Came crowing over Thames.
Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,
Till, where the street grows straiter,
One fix'd for ever at the door,
And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go?
How out of place she makes
The violet of a legend blow
Among the chops and steaks!
'Tis but a steward of the can,
One shade more plump than common;
As just and mere a serving-man
As any, born of woman.

I ranged too high: what draws me down
Into the common day?
Is it the weight of that half-crown,
Which I shall have to pay?
For, something duller than at first,
Nor wholly comfortable,
I sit (my empty glass reversed),
And thrumming on the table:

Half fearful that, with self at strife
I take myself to task;
Lest of the fullness of my life
I leave an empty flask:
For I had hope, by something rare,
To prove myself a poet;
But, while I plan and plan, my hair
Is grey before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,
Till they be gather'd up;
The truth, that flies the flowing can,
Will haunt the vacant cup:
And others' follies teach us not,
Nor much their wisdom teaches;
And most, of sterling worth, is what
Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone!
We know not what we know.
But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone,
'Tis gone, and let it go.
'Tis gone: a thousand such have slipt
Away from my embraces,
And fall'n into the dusty crypt
Of darken'd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou! thy betters went
Long since, and came no more;
With peals of genial clamour sent
From many a tavern-door,
With twisted quirks and happy hits,
From misty men of letters;
The tavern-hours of mighty wits—
Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and looks
Had yet their native glow:
Nor yet the fear of little books
Had made him talk for show;
But, all his vast heart sherris-warm'd,
He flash'd his random speeches;
Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd
His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,
Like all good things on earth!
For should I prize thee, couldst thou last,
At half thy real worth?
I hold it good, good things should pass:
With time I will not quarrel:
It is but yonder empty glass
That makes me maudlin moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,
To which I most resort,
I too must part: I hold thee dear
For this good pint of port.
For this, thou shalt from all things suck
Marrow of mirth and laughter;
And, wheresoe'er thou move, good luck
Shall fling her old shoe after.

But thou wilt never move from hence,
The sphere thy fate allots:
Thy latter days increased with pence
Go down among the pots:
Thou battenest by the greasy gleam
In haunts of hungry sinners,
Old boxes, larded with the steam
Of thirty thousand dinners.

We fret, *we* fume, would shift our skins,
Would quarrel with our lot;
Thy care is, under polish'd tins,
To serve the hot-and-hot;
To come and go, and come again,
Returning like the pewit,
And watch'd by silent gentlemen,
That trifle with the cruet.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head
The thick-set hazel dies;
Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread
The corners of thine eyes:
Live long, nor feel in head or chest
Our changeful equinoxes,
Till mellow Death, like some late guest,
Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt cease
To pace the gritted floor,
And, laying down an unctuous lease
Of life, shalt earn no more;
No carved cross-bones, the types of Death,
Shall show thee past to Heaven:
But carved cross-pipes, and, underneath,
A pint-pot, neatly graven.

TO ——

AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS.

'Cursed be he that moves my bones.'
Shakespeare's Epitaph.

You might have won the Poet's name,
If such be worth the winning now,
And gain'd a laurel for your brow
Of sounder leaf than I can claim;

But you have made the wiser choice,
A life that moves to gracious ends
Thro' troops of unrecording friends,
A deedful life, a silent voice:

And you have miss'd the irreverent doom
Of those that wear the Poet's crown:
Hereafter, neither knave nor clown
Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.

For now the Poet cannot die
Nor leave his music as of old,
But round him ere he scarce be cold
Begins the scandal and the cry:

'Proclaim the faults he would not show:
Break lock and seal: betray the trust:
Keep nothing sacred: 'tis but just
The many-headed beast should know.'

Ah shameless! for he did but sing
A song that pleased us from its worth;
No public life was his on earth,
No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.

He gave the people of his best:
His worst he kept, his best he gave.
My Shakespeare's curse on clown and knave
Who will not let his ashes rest!

Who make it seem more sweet to be
The little life of bank and brier,
The bird that pipes his lone desire
And dies unheard within his tree,

Than he that warbles long and loud
And drops at Glory's temple-gates,
For whom the carrion vulture waits
To tear his heart before the crowd!

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN GREECE

Illyrian woodlands, echoing falls
Of water, sheets of summer glass,
The long divine Peneïan pass,
The vast Akrokeraunian walls,

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,
With such a pencil, such a pen,
You shadow forth to distant men,
I read and felt that I was there:

And trust me while I turn'd the page,
And track'd you still on classic ground,
I grew in gladness till I found
My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd
And glisten'd—here and there alone
The broad-limb'd Gods at random thrown
By fountain-urns;—and Naiads oar'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom
Of cavern pillars; on the swell
The silver lily heaved and fell;
And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea
By dancing rivulets fed his flocks,
To him who sat upon the rocks,
And fluted to the morning sea.

LADY CLARE

It was the time when lilies blow,
And clouds are highest up in air,
Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn:
Lovers long-betroth'd were they:
They two will wed the morrow morn;
God's blessing on the day!

'He does not love me for my birth,
Nor for my lands so broad and fair;
He loves me for my own true worth,
And that is well,' said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
Said, 'Who was this that went from thee?'
'It was my cousin,' said Lady Clare,
'To-morrow he weds with me.'

'O God be thank'd!' said Alice the nurse,
'That all comes round so just and fair:
Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
And you are not the Lady Clare.'

'Are ye out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse?'
Said Lady Clare, 'that ye speak so wild?'
'As God's above,' said Alice the nurse,
'I speak the truth: you are my child.

'The old Earl's daughter died at my breast;
I speak the truth, as I live by bread!
I buried her like my own sweet child,
And put my child in her stead.'

'Falsely, falsely have ye done,
O mother,' she said, 'if this be true,
To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his due.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the nurse,
'But keep the secret for your life,
And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,
When you are man and wife.'

'If I'm a beggar born,' she said,
'I will speak out, for I dare not lie.
Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the nurse,
'But keep the secret all ye can.'
She said 'Not so: but I will know
If there be any faith in man.'

'Nay now, what faith?' said Alice the nurse,
'The man will cleave unto his right.'
'And he shall have it,' the lady replied,
'Tho' I should die to-night.'

'Yet give one kiss to your mother dear!
Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee.'
'O mother, mother, mother,' she said,
'So strange it seems to me.

'Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,
And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go.'

She clad herself in a russet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare:
She went by dale, and she went by down,
With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought
Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower:
'O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!
Why come you drest like a village maid,
That are the flower of the earth?'

'If I come drest like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are:
I am a beggar born,' she said,
'And not the Lady Clare.'

'Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,
'For I am yours in word and in deed.
Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,
'Your riddle is hard to read.'

O and proudly stood she up!
Her heart within her did not fail:
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn:
He turn'd and kiss'd her where she stood:
'If you are not the heiress born,
And I,' said he, 'the next in blood—

'If you are not the heiress born,
And I,' said he, 'the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare.'

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH

In her ear he whispers gaily,
'If my heart by signs can tell,
Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,
And I think thou lov'st me well.'
She replies, in accents fainter,
'There is none I love like thee.'
He is but a landscape-painter,
And a village maiden she.
He to lips, that fondly falter,
Presses his without reproof:

Leads her to the village altar,
And they leave her father's roof.
'I can make no marriage present;
Little can I give my wife.
Love will make our cottage pleasant,
And I love thee more than life.'
They by parks and lodges going
See the lordly castles stand:
Summer woods, about them blowing,
Made a murmur in the land.
From deep thought himself he rouses,
Says to her that loves him well,
'Let us see these handsome houses
Where the wealthy nobles dwell.'
So she goes, by him attended,
Hears him lovingly converse,
Sees whatever fair and splendid
Lay betwixt his home and hers;
Parks with oak and chestnut shady,
Parks and order'd gardens great,
Ancient homes of lord and lady,
Built for pleasure and for state.
All he shows her makes him dearer:
Evermore she seems to gaze
On that cottage growing nearer,
Where they twain will spend their days.
O but she will love him truly!
He shall have a cheerful home;
She will order all things duly,
When beneath his roof they come.
Thus her heart rejoices greatly,
Till a gateway she discerns
With armorial bearings stately,
And beneath the gate she turns;
Sees a mansion more majestic
Than all those she saw before:
Many a gallant gay domestic
Bows before him at the door.
And they speak in gentle murmur,
When they answer to his call,
While he treads with footstep firmer
Leading on from hall to hall.

And, while now she wonders blindly,
Nor the meaning can divine,
Proudly turns he round and kindly,
'All of this is mine and thine.'
Here he lives in state and bounty,
Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
Not a lord in all the county
Is so great a lord as he.
All at once the colour flushes
Her sweet face from brow to chin:
As it were with shame she blushes,
And her spirit changed within.
Then her countenance all over
Pale again as death did prove:
But he clasp'd her like a lover,
And he cheer'd her soul with love.
So she strove against her weakness,
Tho' at times her spirits sank:
Shaped her heart with woman's meekness
To all duties of her rank:
And a gentle consort made he,
And her gentle mind was such
That she grew a noble lady,
And the people loved her much.
But a trouble weigh'd upon her,
And perplex'd her, night and morn,
With the burthen of an honour
Unto which she was not born.
Faint she grew, and ever fainter,
As she murmur'd, 'Oh, that he
Were once more that landscape-painter,
Which did win my heart from me!'
So she droop'd and droop'd before him,
Fading slowly from his side:
Three fair children first she bore him,
Then before her time she died.
Weeping, weeping late and early,
Walking up and pacing down,
Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.
And he came to look upon her,
And he look'd at her and said,

'Bring the dress and put it on her,
That she wore when she was wed.'
Then her people, softly treading,
Bore to earth her body, drest
In the dress that she was wed in,
That her spirit might have rest.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE

A FRAGMENT

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain,
With tears and smiles from heaven again
The maiden Spring upon the plain
Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.
In crystal vapour everywhere
Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
And, far in forest-deeps unseen,
The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song:
Sometimes the throstle whistled strong:
Sometimes the sparhawk, wheel'd along,
Hush'd all the groves from fear of wrong:
By grassy capes with fuller sound
In curves the yellowing river ran,
And drooping chestnut-buds began
To spread into the perfect fan,
Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere
Rode thro' the coverts of the deer,
With blissful treble ringing clear.
She seem'd a part of joyous Spring:
A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
Buckled with golden clasps before;
A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,
Now by some tinkling rivulet,
In mosses mixt with violet
Her cream-white mule his pastern set:
And fleeter now she skimm'd the plains
Than she whose elfin prancer springs
By night to eery warblings,
When all the glimmering moorland rings
With jingling bridle-reins.

As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
The happy winds upon her play'd,
Blowing the ringlet from the braid:
She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd
The rein with dainty finger-tips,
A man had given all other bliss,
And all his worldly worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips.

A FAREWELL

FLOW down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver:
No more by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet then a river:
No where by thee my steps shall be
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder-tree,
And here thine aspen shiver;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

THE BEGGAR MAID

HER arms across her breast she laid;
She was more fair than words can say:
Bare-footed came the beggar maid
Before the king Cophetua.
In robe and crown the king stept down,
To meet and greet her on her way;
'It is no wonder,' said the lords,
'She is more beautiful than day.'

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
She in her poor attire was seen:
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair and lovesome mien.
So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been:
Cophetua sware a royal oath:
'This beggar maid shall be my queen!'

THE VISION OF SIN

I

I HAD a vision when the night was late:
A youth came riding toward a palace-gate.
He rode a horse with wings, that would have flown,
But that his heavy rider kept him down.
And from the palace came a child of sin,
And took him by the curls, and led him in,
Where sat a company with heated eyes,
Expecting when a fountain should arise:
A sleepy light upon their brows and lips—
As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and capes—
Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid shapes,
By heaps of gourds and skins of wine, and piles of grapes.

II

Then methought I heard a mellow sound,
Gathering up from all the lower ground;
Narrowing in to where they sat assembled
Low voluptuous music winding trembled,
Wov'n in circles: they that heard it sigh'd,
Panted hand in hand with faces pale,
Swung themselves, and in low tones replied;
Till the fountain spouted, showering wide
Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail;
Then the music touch'd the gates and died;
Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale;
Till thronging in and in, to where they waited,
As 'twere a hundred-throated nightingale,
The strong tempestuous treble throbb'd and palpitated;
Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
Caught the sparkles, and in circles,
Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid mazes,
Flung the torrent rainbow round:
Then they started from their places,
Moved with violence, changed in hue,
Caught each other with wild grimaces,
Half-invisible to the view,
Wheeling with precipitate paces
To the melody, till they flew
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,
Twisted hard in fierce embraces,
Like to Furies, like to Graces,
Dash'd together in blinding dew:
Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,
The nerve-dissolving melody
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

III

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-tract,
That girt the region with high cliff and lawn:
I saw that every morning, far withdrawn
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn,

Unheeded: and detaching, fold by fold,
From those still heights, and, slowly drawing near,
A vapour heavy, hueless, formless, cold,
Came floating on for many a month and year,
Unheeded: and I thought I would have spoken,
And warn'd that madman ere it grew too late:
But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine was broken,
When that cold vapour touch'd the palace-gate,
And link'd again. I saw within my head
A grey and gap-tooth'd man as lean as death,
Who slowly rode across a wither'd heath,
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said:

IV

'Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin!
Here is custom come your way;
Take my brute, and lead him in,
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

'Bitter barmaid, waning fast!
See that sheets are on my bed;
What! the flower of life is past:
It is long before you wed.

'Slip-shod waiter, lank and sour,
At the Dragon on the heath!
Let us have a quiet hour,
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

'I am old, but let me drink;
Bring me spices, bring me wine;
I remember, when I think,
That my youth was half divine.

'Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,
When a blanket wraps the day,
When the rotten woodland drips,
And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

'Sit thee down, and have no shame,
Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee:
What care I for any name?
What for order or degree?

'Let me screw thee up a peg:
Let me loose thy tongue with wine:
Callest thou that thing a leg?
Which is thinnest? thine or mine?

'Thou shalt not be saved by works:
Thou hast been a sinner too:
Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,
Empty scarecrows, I and you!

'Fill the cup, and fill the can:
Have a rouse before the morn:
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

'We are men of ruin'd blood;
Therefore comes it we are wise.
Fish are we that love the mud,
Rising to no fancy-flies.

'Name and fame! to fly sublime
Thro' the courts, the camps, the schools,
Is to be the ball of Time,
Bandied by the hands of fools.

'Friendship!—to be two in one—
Let the canting liar pack!
Well I know, when I am gone,
How she mouths behind my back.

'Virtue!—to be good and just—
Every heart, when sifted well,
Is a clot of warmer dust,
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

'O! we two as well can look
Whited thought and cleanly life
As the priest, above his book
Leering at his neighbour's wife.

'Fill the cup, and fill the can:
Have a rouse before the morn:
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

'Drink, and let the parties rave:
They are fill'd with idle spleen;
Rising, falling, like a wave,
For they know not what they mean.

'He that roars for liberty
Faster binds a tyrant's power;
And the tyrant's cruel glee
Forces on the freer hour.

'Fill the can, and fill the cup:
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

'Greet her with applausive breath,
Freedom, gaily doth she tread;
In her right a civic wreath,
In her left a human head.

'No, I love not what is new;
She is of an ancient house:
And I think we know the hue
Of that cap upon her brows.

'Let her go! her thirst she slakes
Where the bloody conduit runs:
Then her sweetest meal she makes
On the first-born of her sons.

'Drink to lofty hopes that cool—
Visions of a perfect State:
Drink we, last, the public fool,
Frantic love and frantic hate.

'Chant me now some wicked stave,
Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

'Fear not thou to loose thy tongue;
Set thy hoary fancies free;
What is loathsome to the young
Savours well to thee and me.

'Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand.

'Tell me tales of thy first love—
April hopes, the fools of chance;
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.

'Fill the can, and fill the cup:
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

'Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads:
Welcome, fellow-citizens,
Hollow hearts and empty heads!

'You are bones, and what of that?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell'd on a skull.

'Death is king, and Vivat Rex!
Tread a measure on the stones,
Madam—if I know your sex,
From the fashion of your bones.

'No, I cannot praise the fire
In your eye—nor yet your lip:
All the more do I admire
Joints of cunning workmanship.

'Lo! God's likeness—the ground-plan—
Neither modell'd, glazed, nor framed:
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed!

'Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath!
Drink to heavy Ignorance!
Hob-and-nob with brother Death!

'Thou art mazed, the night is long,
And the longer night is near:
What! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.

'Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curl'd;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.

'Fill the cup, and fill the can!
Mingle madness, mingle scorn!
Dregs of life, and lees of man:
Yet we will not die forlorn.'

V

The voice grew faint: there came a further change:
Once more uprose the mystic mountain-range:
Below were men and horses pierced with worms,
And slowly quickening into lower forms;
By shards and scurf of salt, and scum of dross,
Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd with moss.
Then some one spake: 'Behold! it was a crime
Of sense avenged by sense that wore with time.'
Another said: 'The crime of sense became
The crime of malice, and is equal blame.'
And one: 'He had not wholly quench'd his power;
A little grain of conscience made him sour.'
At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, 'Is there any hope?'
To which an answer peal'd from that high land,
But in a tongue no man could understand;
And on the glimmering limit far withdrawn
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

COME NOT, WHEN I AM DEAD

COME not, when I am dead,
To drop thy foolish tears upon my grave,
To trample round my fallen head,
And vex the unhappy dust thou wouldst not save.
There let the wind sweep and the plover cry;
But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest:
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of Time,
And I desire to rest.
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where I lie:
Go by, go by.

THE EAGLE

FRAGMENT

He clasps the crag with hooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

MOVE EASTWARD, HAPPY EARTH

Move eastward, happy earth, and leave
Yon orange sunset waning slow:
From fringes of the faded eve,
O, happy planet, eastward go;
Till over thy dark shoulder glow
Thy silver sister-world, and rise
To glass herself in dewy eyes
That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage-morn,
And round again to happy night.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

Break, break, break,
On thy cold grey stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

THE POET'S SONG

The rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
He pass'd by the town and out of the street,
A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,
And waves of shadow went over the wheat,
And he sat him down in a lonely place,
And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
That made the wild-swan pause in her cloud,
And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the bee,
The snake slipt under a spray,
The wild hawk stood with the down on his beak,
And stared, with his foot on the prey,
And the nightingale thought, 'I have sung many songs,
But never a one so gay,
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away.'

AFTERTHOUGHT[1]

Ah, God! the petty fools of rhyme,
 That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars
Before the stony face of Time,
 And look'd at by the silent stars;—

That hate each other for a song,
 And do their little best to bite,
That pinch their brothers in the throng,
 And scratch the very dead for spite;—

And strain to make an inch of room
 For their sweet selves, and cannot hear
The sullen Lethe rolling doom
 On them and theirs, and all things here;

When one small touch of Charity
 Could lift them nearer godlike state,
Than if the crowded orb should cry
 Like those that cried Diana great:

And *I* too talk, and lose the touch
 I talk of. Surely, after all,
The noblest answer unto such
 Is kindly silence when they brawl.

SONNET TO W. C. MACREADY[2]

Farewell, Macready, since to-night we part.
 Full-handed thunders often have confest
 Thy power, well-used to move the public breast.
We thank thee with our voice, and from the heart.
Farewell, Macready; since this night we part.
 Go, take thine honours home: rank with the best,

[1] Originally inserted in *Punch* (March 7, 1846); afterwards printed in *Works* under the title of 'Literary Squabbles.'

[2] Addressed to Macready on leaving the stage in 1851. First published in *Household Narrative* of that year.

Garrick, and statelier Kemble, and the rest
Who made a nation purer thro' their art.
Thine is it, that our Drama did not die,
Nor flicker down to brainless Pantomime,
And those gilt gauds men-children swarm to see.
Farewell, Macready; moral, grave, sublime.
Our Shakespeare's bland and universal eye
Dwells pleased, thro' twice a hundred years, on thee.

HANDS ALL ROUND [1]

FIRST drink a health, this solemn night,
A health to England, every guest;
That man's the best cosmopolite,
Who loves his native country best.
May Freedom's oak for ever live
With stronger life from day to day;
That man's the true Conservative
Who lops the moulder'd branch away.
Hands all round!
God the tyrant's hope confound!
To this great cause of freedom drink, my friends,
And the great name of England round and round.

A health to Europe's honest men!
Heaven guard them from her tyrant's jails!
From wrong'd Poerio's noisome den,
From iron'd limbs and tortured nails!
We curse the crimes of southern kings,
The Russian whips and Austrian rods—
We, likewise, have our evil things;
Too much we make our Ledgers Gods.
Yet hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To Europe's better health we drink, my friends,
And the great name of England round and round.

[1] From the *Examiner*, Feb. 7, 1852.

What health to France, if France be she,
Whom martial prowess only charms?
Yet tell her—Better to be free
Than vanquish all the world in arms.
Her frantic city's flashing heats
But fire, to blast, the hopes of men.
Why change the titles of your streets?
You fools, you'll want them all again.
Yet hands all round!
God their tyrant's cause confound!
To France, the wiser France, we drink, my friends,
And the great name of England round and round.

Gigantic daughter of the West,
We drink to thee across the flood,
We know thee most, we love thee best,
For art thou not of British blood?
Should war's mad blast again be blown,
Permit not thou the tyrant powers
To fight thy mother here alone,
But let thy broadsides roar with ours.
Hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To our great kinsmen of the West, my friends,
And the great name of England round and round.

O rise, our strong Atlantic sons,
When war against our freedom springs!
O speak to Europe thro' your guns!
They *can* be understood by kings.
You must not mix our Queen with those
That wish to keep their people fools;
Our freedom's foemen are her foes,
She comprehends the race she rules.
Hands all round!
God the tyrant's cause confound!
To our dear kinsmen of the West, my friends,
And the great cause of Freedom round and round.

THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY, 1852[1]

My Lords, we heard you speak: you told us all
That England's honest censure went too far;
That our free press should cease to brawl,
Not sting the fiery Frenchman into war.
It was our ancient privilege, my Lords,
To fling whate'er we felt, not fearing, into words.

We love not this French God, the child of Hell,
Wild War, who breaks the converse of the wise;
But though we love kind Peace so well,
We dare not ev'n by silence sanction lies.
It might be safe our censures to withdraw;
And yet, my Lords, not well: there is a higher law.

As long as we remain, we must speak free,
Tho' all the storm of Europe on us break;
No little German state are we,
But the one voice in Europe: we *must* speak;
That if to-night our greatness were struck dead,
There might be left some record of the things we said.

If you be fearful, then must we be bold.
Our Britain cannot salve a tyrant o'er.
Better the waste Atlantic roll'd
On her and us and ours for evermore.
What! have we fought for Freedom from our prime,
At last to dodge and palter with a public crime?

Shall we fear *him*? our own we never fear'd.
From our first Charles by force we wrung our claims.
Prick'd by the Papal spur, we rear'd,
We flung the burthen of the second James.
I say, we *never* feared! and as for these,
We broke them on the land, we drove them on the seas.

[1] Parliament opened on this date. In the debate in the House of Lords on the Address several of the speakers deprecated the violent opposition to Napoleon and France which the *coup d'état* had aroused in the press and on the platform. The poem first appeared in the *Examiner* of Feb. 7, 1852, under the signature of 'Merlin.'

And you, my Lords, you make the people muse
In doubt if you be of our Barons' breed—
Were those your sires who fought at Lewes?
Is this the manly strain of Runnymede?
O fall'n nobility, that, overawed,
Would lisp in honey'd whispers of this monstrous fraud!

We feel, at least, that silence here were sin,
Not ours the fault if we have feeble hosts—
If easy patrons of their kin
Have left the last free race with naked coasts!
They knew the precious things they had to guard:
For us, we will not spare the tyrant one hard word.

Tho' niggard throats of Manchester may bawl,
What England was, shall her true sons forget?
We are not cotton-spinners all,
But some love England and her honour yet.
And these in our Thermopylae shall stand,
And hold against the world this honour of the land.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

I

Bury the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation,
Let us bury the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the Past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute:
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good grey head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V

All is over and done:
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.

Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd:
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds:
Bright let it be with his blazón'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd:
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom;
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame;
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-ringing avenues of song.

VI

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?
Mighty seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.

Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea;
His foes were thine; he kept us free;
O give him welcome, this is he,
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs
Of his labour'd rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Past the Pyrenean pines,
Follow'd up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down;
A day of onsets of despair!
Dash'd on every rocky square
Their surging charges foam'd themselves away;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
Thro' the long-tormented air

Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there,
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world's-earthquake, Waterloo!
Mighty seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,
If love of country move thee there at all,
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim,
A people's voice,
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

VII

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers;
Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
His Saxon in blown seas and storming showers,
We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love and reverence and regret
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control;
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
And save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings;
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,

Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
Remember him who led your hosts;
He bad you guard the sacred coasts.
Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
His voice is silent in your council-hall
For ever; and whatever tempests lour
For ever silent; even if they broke
In thunder, silent; yet remember all
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;
Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow
Thro' either babbling world of high and low;
Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life;
Who never spoke against a foe;
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
All great self-seekers trampling on the right:
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
Truth-lover was our English Duke;
Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be shamed.

VIII

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.

Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he: his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure;
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory:
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumined cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not see:
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung:
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain!
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere.
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free

For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane:
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears:
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears:
The black earth yawns: the mortal disappears;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
He is gone who seem'd so great.—
Gone; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
But speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.

1852.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

I

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' he said:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II

'Forward, the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

IV

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:

Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

V

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

THE BROOK

AN IDYL

'HERE, by this brook, we parted; I to the East
And he for Italy—too late—too late:
One whom the strong sons of the world despise;
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and share,
And mellow metres more than cent for cent;
Nor could he understand how money breeds,

Thought it a dead thing; yet himself could make
The thing that is not as the thing that is.
O had he lived! In our schoolbooks we say,
Of those that held their heads above the crowd,
They flourish'd then or then; but life in him
Could scarce be said to flourish, only touch'd
On such a time as goes before the leaf,
When all the wood stands in a mist of green,
And nothing perfect: yet the brook he loved,
For which, in branding summers of Bengal,
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neilgherry air,
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,
Prattling the primrose fancies of the boy,
To me that loved him; for "O brook," he says,
"O babbling brook," says Edmund in his rhyme,
"Whence come you?" and the brook, why not? replies.

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

'Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite worn out,
Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,
It has more ivy; there the river; and there
Stands Philip's farm where brook and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy-foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

'But Philip chatter'd more than brook or bird;
Old Philip; all about the fields you caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

'O darling Katie Willows, his one child!
A maiden of our century, yet most meek;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse;
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

'Sweet Katie, once I did her a good turn,
Her and her far-off cousin and betrothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart with her.
For here I came, twenty years back—the week
Before I parted with poor Edmund; crost
By that old bridge which, half in ruins then,
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry—crost,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate. The gate,
Half-parted from a weak and scolding hinge,
Stuck; and he clamour'd from a casement, "Run"
To Katie somewhere in the walks below.

"Run, Katie!" Katie never ran: she moved
To meet me, winding under woodbine bowers;
A little flutter'd, with her eyelids down,
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a boon.

'What was it? less of sentiment than sense
Had Katie; not illiterate; neither one
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive tears,
And nursed by mealy-mouth'd philanthropies,
Divorce the Feeling from her mate the Deed.

'She told me. She and James had quarrell'd. Why?
What cause of quarrel? None, she said, no cause;
James had no cause: but when I prest the cause,
I learnt that James had flickering jealousies
Which anger'd her. Who anger'd James? I said.
But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from mine,
And sketching with her slender pointed foot
Some figure like a wizard's pentagram
On garden gravel, let my query pass
Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I ask'd
If James were coming. "Coming every day,"
She answer'd, "ever longing to explain,
But evermore her father came across
With some long-winded tale, and broke him short;
And James departed vext with him and her."
How could I help her? "Would I—was it wrong?"
(Claspt hands and that petitionary grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she spoke)
"O would I take her father for one hour,
For one half-hour, and let him talk to me!"
And even while she spoke, I saw where James
Made toward us, like a wader in the surf,
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-sweet.

'O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!
For in I went, and call'd old Philip out
To show the farm: full willingly he rose:
He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling lanes
Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he went.
He praised his land, his horses, his machines;
He praised his ploughs, his cows, his hogs, his dogs;

He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea-hens;
His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
Approved him, bowing at their own deserts:
Then from the plaintive mother's teat he took
Her blind and shuddering puppies, naming each,
And naming those, his friends, for whom they were:
Then crost the common into Darnley chase
To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and fern
Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,
He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said:
"That was the four-year-old I sold the Squire."
And there he told a long long-winded tale
Of how the Squire had seen the colt at grass,
And how it was the thing his daughter wish'd,
And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
To learn the price, and what the price he ask'd,
And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
He gave them line: and five days after that
He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,
Who then and there had offer'd something more,
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
He knew the man; the colt would fetch its price;
He gave them line: and how by chance at last
(It might be May or April, he forgot,
The last of April or the first of May)
He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
And, talking from the point, he drew him in,
And there he mellow'd all his heart with ale,
Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

'Then, while I breathed in sight of haven, he,
Poor fellow, could he help it? recommenced,
And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,
Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tallyho,
Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the Jilt,
Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the rest,
Till, not to die a listener, I arose,
And with me Philip, talking still; and so
We turn'd our foreheads from the falling sun,
And following our own shadows thrice as long

As when they follow'd us from Philip's door,
Arrived, and found the sun of sweet content
Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go; and these are gone,
All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund, sleeps,
Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire,
But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
Of Brunelleschi; sleeps in peace: and he,
Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of words
Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:
I scraped the lichen from it: Katie walks
By the long wash of Australasian seas
Far off, and holds her head to other stars,
And breathes in converse seasons. All are gone.'

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a stile
In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind
Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the brook
A tonsured head in middle age forlorn,
Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a low breath
Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
The fragile bindweed-bells and briony rings;
And he look'd up. There stood a maiden near,
Waiting to pass. In much amaze he stared

On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within:
Then, wondering, ask'd her 'Are you from the farm?'
'Yes,' answer'd she. 'Pray stay a little: pardon me;
What do they call you?' 'Katie.' 'That were strange.
What surname?' 'Willows.' 'No!' 'That is my name.'
'Indeed!' and here he look'd so self-perplext,
That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd, till he
Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
Who feels a glimmering strangeness in his dream.
Then looking at her: 'Too happy, fresh and fair,
Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best bloom,
To be the ghost of one who bore your name
About these meadows, twenty years ago.'

'Have you not heard?' said Katie, 'we came back.
We bought the farm we tenanted before.
Am I so like her? so they said on board.
Sir, if you knew her in her English days,
My mother, as it seems you did, the days
That most she loves to talk of, come with me.
My brother James is in the harvest-field:
But she—you will be welcome—O, come in!'

THE LETTERS

I

STILL on the tower stood the vane,
A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,
I peer'd athwart the chancel pane
And saw the altar cold and bare.
A clog of lead was round my feet,
A band of pain across my brow;
'Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall meet
Before you hear my marriage vow.'

II

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter song
That mock'd the wholesome human heart,
And then we met in wrath and wrong,
We met, but only meant to part.
Full cold my greeting was and dry;
She faintly smiled, she hardly moved;
I saw with half-unconscious eye
She wore the colours I approved.

III

She took the little ivory chest,
With half a sigh she turn'd the key,
Then raised her head with lips comprest,
And gave my letters back to me.
And gave the trinkets and the rings,
My gifts, when gifts of mine could please;
As looks a father on the things
Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

IV

She told me all her friends had said;
I raged against the public liar;
She talk'd as if her love were dead,
But in my words were seeds of fire.
'No more of love; your sex is known:
I never will be twice deceived.
Henceforth I trust the man alone,
The woman cannot be believed.

V

'Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell
(And women's slander is the worst),
And you, whom once I lov'd so well,
Thro' you, my life will be accurst.'
I spoke with heart, and heat and force,
I shook her breast with vague alarms—
Like torrents from a mountain source
We rush'd into each other's arms.

VI

We parted: sweetly gleam'd the stars,
And sweet the vapour-braided blue,
Low breezes fann'd the belfry bars,
As homeward by the church I drew.
The very graves appear'd to smile,
So fresh they rose in shadow'd swells;
'Dark porch,' I said, 'and silent aisle,
There comes a sound of marriage bells.'

THE DAISY

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH

O LOVE, what hours were thine and mine,
In lands of palm and southern pine;
In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd
In ruin, by the mountain road;
How like a gem, beneath, the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell
To meet the sun and sunny waters,
That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue;
Where, here and there, on sandy beaches
A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,
Yet present in his natal grove,
Now watching high on mountain cornice,
And steering, now, from a purple cove,

Now pacing mute by ocean's rim;
Till, in a narrow street and dim,
I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,
And drank, and loyally drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleased us most,
Not the clipt palm of which they boast;
But distant colour, happy hamlet,
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
A light amid its olives green;
Or olive-hoary cape in ocean;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread;
And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and cold,
Those niched shapes of noble mould,
A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,
In those long galleries, were ours;
What drives about the fresh Cascinè,
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,
Or palace, how the city glitter'd,
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we crost the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain;
Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma;
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles;
Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,
The giant windows' blazon'd fires,
The height, the space, the gloom, the glory!
A mount of marble, a hundred spires!

I climb'd the roofs at break of day;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.
I stood among the silent statues,
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there
A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como; shower and storm and blast
Had blown the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flooded; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,
And in my head, for half the day,
The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burthen music, kept,
As on The Lariano crept
To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,
The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agavè above the lake.

What more? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splugen drew,
But ere we reach'd the highest summit
I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,
And now it tells of Italy.
O love, we two shall go no longer
To lands of summer across the sea;

So dear a life your arms enfold
Whose crying is a cry for gold:
 Yet here to-night in this dark city,
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,
This nurseling of another sky
 Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by:

And I forgot the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and Earth,
 The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,
 Perchance, to dream you still beside me,
My fancy fled to the South again.

TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE

Come, when no graver cares employ,
God-father, come and see your boy:
 Your presence will be sun in winter,
Making the little one leap for joy.

For, being of that honest few,
Who give the Fiend himself his due,
 Should eighty thousand college-councils
Thunder 'Anathema,' friend, at you;

Should all our churchmen foam in spite
At you, so careful of the right,
 Yet one lay-hearth would give you welcome
(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight;

Where, far from noise and smoke of town,
I watch the twilight falling brown
All round a careless-order'd garden
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You'll have no scandal while you dine,
But honest talk and wholesome wine,
And only hear the magpie gossip
Garrulous under a roof of pine:

For groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, stand;
And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumbles a breaker on chalk and sand;

Where, if below the milky steep
Some ship of battle slowly creep,
And on thro' zones of light and shadow
Glimmer away to the lonely deep,

We might discuss the Northern sin
Which made a selfish war begin;
Dispute the claims, arrange the chances;
Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win:

Or whether war's avenging rod
Shall lash all Europe into blood;
Till you should turn to dearer matters,
Dear to the man that is dear to God;

How best to help the slender store,
How mend the dwellings of the poor;
How gain in life, as life advances,
Valour and charity more and more.

Come, Maurice, come: the lawn as yet
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet;
But when the wreath of March has blossom'd,
Crocus, anemone, violet,

Or later, pay one visit here,
For those are few we hold as dear;
Nor pay but one, but come for many,
Many and many a happy year.

WILL

I

O WELL for him whose will is strong!
He suffers, but he will not suffer long;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong:
For him nor moves the loud world's random mock,
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
Who seems a promontory of rock,
That, compass'd round with turbulent sound,
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

II

But ill for him who, bettering not with time,
Corrupts the strength of heaven-descended Will,
And ever weaker grows thro' acted crime,
Or seeming-genial venial fault,
Recurring and suggesting still!
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
Toiling in immeasurable sand,
And o'er a weary sultry land,
Far beneath a blazing vault,
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

THE CAPTAIN

A LEGEND OF THE NAVY

He that only rules by terror
Doeth grievous wrong.
Deep as Hell I count his error.
Let him hear my song.
Brave the Captain was: the seamen
Made a gallant crew,
Gallant sons of English freemen,
Sailors bold and true.
But they hated his oppression,
Stern he was and rash;
So for every light transgression
Doomed them to the lash.
Day by day more harsh and cruel
Seemed the Captain's mood.
Secret wrath like smothered fuel
Burnt in each man's blood.
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
Hoped to make the name
Of his vessel great in story,
Wheresoe'er he came.
So they past by capes and islands,
Many a harbour-mouth,
Sailing under palmy highlands
Far within the South.
On a day when they were going
O'er the lone expanse,
In the north, her canvas flowing,
Rose a ship of France.
Then the Captain's colour heightened,
Joyful came his speech:
But a cloudy gladness lightened
In the eyes of each.
'Chase,' he said: the ship flew forward,
And the wind did blow;
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,
Till she neared the foe.

Then they looked at him they hated,
Had what they desired:
Mute with folded arms they waited—
Not a gun was fired.
But they heard the foemen's thunder
Roaring out their doom;
All the air was torn in sunder,
Crashing went the boom,
Spars were splintered, decks were shattered,
Bullets fell like rain;
Over mast and deck were scattered
Blood and brains of men.
Spars were splintered; decks were broken:
Every mother's son—
Down they dropt—no word was spoken—
Each beside his gun.
On the decks as they were lying,
Were their faces grim.
In their blood, as they lay dying,
Did they smile on him.
Those, in whom he had reliance
For his noble name,
With one smile of still defiance
Sold him unto shame.
Shame and wrath his heart confounded,
Pale he turned and red,
Till himself was deadly wounded
Falling on the dead.
Dismal error! fearful slaughter!
Years have wandered by,
Side by side beneath the water
Crew and Captain lie;
There the sunlit ocean tosses
O'er them mouldering,
And the lonely sea-bird crosses
With one waft of the wing.

THE VOYAGE

I

We left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbour-mouth;
And madly danced our hearts with joy,
As fast we fleeted to the South:
How fresh was every sight and sound
On open main or winding shore!
We knew the merry world was round,
And we might sail for evermore.

II

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail:
The Lady's-head upon the prow
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the gale.
The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,
And swept behind: so quick the run,
We felt the good ship shake and reel,
We seem'd to sail into the Sun!

III

How oft we saw the Sun retire,
And burn the threshold of the night,
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
And sleep beneath his pillar'd light!
How oft the purple-skirted robe
Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
As thro' the slumber of the globe
Again we dash'd into the dawn!

IV

New stars all night above the brim
Of waters lighten'd into view;
They climb'd as quickly, for the rim
Changed every moment as we flew.
Far ran the naked moon across
The houseless ocean's heaving field,
Or flying shone, the silver boss
Of her own halo's dusky shield;

V

The peaky islet shifted shapes,
 High towns on hills were dimly seen,
We past long lines of Northern capes
 And dewy Northern meadows green.
We came to warmer waves, and deep
 Across the boundless east we drove,
Where those long swells of breakers sweep
 The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

VI

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
 Gloom'd the low coast and quivering brine
With ashy rains, that spreading made
 Fantastic plume or sable pine;
By sands and steaming flats, and floods
 Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
 Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII

O hundred shores of happy climes,
 How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark!
At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
 With wakes of fire we tore the dark;
At times a carven craft would shoot
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,
With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,
 But we nor paused for fruit nor flowers.

VIII

For one fair Vision ever fled
 Down the waste waters day and night,
And still we follow'd where she led,
 In hope to gain upon her flight.
Her face was evermore unseen,
 And fixt upon the far sea-line;
But each man murmur'd 'O my Queen,
 I follow till I make thee mine.'

IX

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd
Like Fancy made of golden air,
Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,
Now high on waves that idly burst
Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the sea,
And now, the bloodless point reversed,
She bore the blade of Liberty.

X

And only one among us—him
We pleased not—he was seldom pleased:
He saw not far: his eyes were dim:
But ours he swore were all diseased.
'A ship of fools' he shrieked in spite,
'A ship of fools' he sneer'd and wept.
And overboard one stormy night
He cast his body, and on we swept.

XI

And never sail of ours was furl'd,
Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn;
We loved the glories of the world,
But laws of nature were our scorn;
For blasts would rise and rave and cease,
But whence were those that drove the sail
Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,
And to and thro' the counter-gale?

XII

Again to colder climes we came,
For still we follow'd where she led:
Now mate is blind and captain lame,
And half the crew are sick or dead.
But blind or lame or sick or sound
We follow that which flies before:
We know the merry world is round,
And we may sail for evermore.

NOTES

THE EPIC. PAGE 1

PAGE 1. l. 15. *Church commissioners.* This was a much-discussed topic of the day, especially among the clergy about the year 1833.

l. 18. *General decay of faith.* The story of the apparent failure of Arthur is meant as an answer to the Parson's desponding words.

PAGE 2. ll. 31, 32. *a truth Looks freshest,* &c. Tennyson's great power is shown in the opposite method, whereby he inoculates ancient stories with modern thought.

l. 36. *the Mastodon,* an extinct species of mammal closely allied to the elephant, but generally larger. Their remains occur in nearly all parts of the world.

ll. 48–51. *the poet little urged,* &c. Edward FitzGerald gives us an interesting note on Tennyson's reading of his own poems, which shows that this passage is a good description of himself: 'Mouthing out his hollow oes and aes, deep-chested music, this is something as Alfred Tennyson reads, with a broad north-country vowel, except the *u* in such words as "mute", "brute", which he pronounced like the tin French "u". His voice, very deep and deep-chested, but rather murmuring than mouthing, like the sound of a far sea or of a pine wood, I remember greatly struck Carlyle when he first came to know him.'

MORTE D'ARTHUR. PAGE 2.

Tennyson wished to leave the question open whether his King Arthur was to be taken as an historical person or an allegory of the conscience of man. The question was not raised by earlier writers, e.g. Sir Thomas Malory, who treated Arthur simply as a hero of romance. See notes on *The Lady of Shalott.*

This magnificent poem, though written as early as 1835, was never subject to revision. After thirty years, even the almost fastidious taste of Tennyson could not find a word to alter.

In later years, when the whole scheme of the *Idylls* had taken shape in his mind, the *Epic* and the *Epilogue* were omitted, but an extraordinarily fine description of the great battle was prefixed, connecting the story with the overthrow of the Round Table, and the solemn parting with Guinevere at Amesbury. Some twenty-nine lines were also added, which seem partially to lift the veil, and show us that the failure and gloom is only apparent.

The points in the story which must be borne in mind are as follows:—

In *The Coming of Arthur* we read of the great battles whereby the youthful king won his throne and his beautiful bride. The tragedy began when he sent Lancelot, his best-loved knight, to fetch Guinevere home. Tennyson was himself wont to explain (so his son tells us [1]), that the great resolve (to ennoble and spiritualize mankind) is kept, so long as all work in obedience to the highest and holiest law within them: in those days when all the court is one Utopia,

> The King will follow Christ, and we the King
> In whom High God has breathed a secret thing.

Thus in *Gareth* the 'joy of life in steepness overcome, And victories of ascent' lives in the eternal youth of goodness. But in the later *Idylls* the allowed sin not only poisons the spring of life in the sinner, but spreads its poison through the whole community. In some natures, even among those who would 'rather die than doubt,' it breeds suspicion and want of trust in God and man. Some loyal souls are wrought to madness against the world; others, and some among the highest intellects, become the slaves of the evil which is at first half-disdained. Tender natures sink under the blight, that which is of the highest in them working their death. And in some, as faith declines, religion turns from practical goodness and holiness to superstition:

> This madness has come on us for our sin.

These seek relief in selfish spiritual excitement not remembering that man's duty is to forget self in the service of others, and to let visions come and go, and that so only will they see 'The Holy Thing'. In the Idyll of *Pelleas and Etarre* selfishness has turned to open crime; it is 'the breaking of the storm'; nevertheless Pelleas still honours his sacred vow to the king and spares the wrongdoers. Whereas in *The Last Tournament* the wrongdoer (the false Tristram) suffers his doom and 'is cloven thro' the brain'.

In *Guinevere* we find that the treacherous Modred has succeeded in proving the guilt of Lancelot and the queen, and the latter has fled disguised to the convent of Amesbury. The king has gone to wage war on Lancelot, and Modred has raised the standard of rebellion. Then comes Arthur's last farewell to Guinevere, ere he goes to meet his doom. In the later version, *The Passing of Arthur*, we read of the march towards the West, of the last awful mental struggle, when Arthur passes through the depths of anguish—forsaken, forgotten, it seems, even by his God. Then comes the embodiment of all this inner conflict in the fight with the traitors, a battle fought in a death-white mist, in

[1] *Life of Tennyson.*

a ghastly confusion of insult, writhings, and monstrous blasphemies. But at last the great blow is struck with the mystic sword. Modred lies dead and Excalibur's work is done.

Here the *Morte d'Arthur* opens; the mist has cleared, all is still, and in the moonlight we see the dying king.

PAGE 2. l. 3. *King Arthur's Table.* Legend says that Merlin made it for Uther Pendragon, Arthur's father; that it was given by Uther to Leodogran, the father of Guinevere, who presented it as a wedding gift to Arthur: One of the seats was called the *Siege* (seat) *Perilous*, because it swallowed up any one impure who attempted to sit in it. Galahad was the only knight who could use it safely. Here the expression stands for the whole order of Arthur's knights.

l. 4. *Lyonnesse.* Supposed to be a district between Cornwall and the Scilly Isles, now covered by the sea. Tennyson spoke of it in *The Passing of Arthur* as

> A land of old upheaven from the abyss
> By fire, to sink into the abyss again.

PAGE 3. l. 14. *unsolders*, breaks up; *solder* is a kind of cement used for uniting metals.

l. 21. *Camelot*, see note on *The Lady of Shalott*, p. 108.

l. 23. *Merlin.* The magician who, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, set up the great stones of Stonehenge on Salisbury plain. In *Merlin and Vivien* he is said to have been the son of a demon. He found the infant Arthur, on the night of the storm, when King Uther died, and protected him until he was old enough to claim the kingdom. It was he who uttered the prophetical riddle about the king:

> From the great deep to the great deep he goes.

l. 27. *Excalibur.* The magic sword given to Arthur by the Lady of the Lake, see l. 29. Roquefort says that the name comes from a Hebrew word meaning *carve iron.*

l. 31. *samite*, a rich silk woven with gold and silver thread; from the Greek ἑξάμιτον, meaning woven with six threads.

PAGE 4. l. 57. *topaz lights.* A jewel of various colours, yellow, green, blue, or brown. The oriental topaz is a clear yellow.

jacinth work. The Greek form of the word is hyacinthus, a jewel of the colour of the hyacinth, blue or purple. The jewel now known as jacinth, however, is a hard reddish brown stone resembling amber.

ll. 70, 71. The fine onomatopoeic effect should be noticed in these two lines.

PAGE 5. l. 104. *Maiden of the Lake.* In *Lancelot and Elaine, the Lady* is said to have stolen Lancelot from his mother's arms. Some say that in the *Idylls* she typifies Religion.

l. 110. *concert*, here notion, idea.

l. 121. *Authority . . . will*, cf. *Queen Mary* v. 5,

The Queen is dying or you dare not say it.

l. 122. *laid widow'd*, bereft.

PAGE 6. l. 139. *streamer of the northern morn*, the flashes of coloured light, known as the *Aurora borealis*.

l. 140. *moving isles*, floating icebergs.

PAGE 7. l. 188. *bare black cliff . . .*, this and the lines which follow are fine examples of sound suited to sense: the verse helping to give the idea of the sharpness of all sounds in the frost.

l. 197. *black-stoled*, the stole is a long loose robe reaching to the feet.

l. 198. *Three Queens*. The three Queens who appeared at his crowning. See *Coming of Arthur*, ll. 275–8.

'In the original *Morte d'Arthur* one was King Arthur's sister, Queen Morgan le Fay; the other was the Queen of Northgalis, the third was the Queen of the Waste lands; some say that the three Queens are Faith, Hope, and Charity.'

l. 215. *greaves*, armour for the lower part of the legs; *cuisses*, armour for the thighs.

l. 218. *dais*, platform, from same root as disc: it meant originally a quoit, then a round platter, then a throne, and finally the raised platform on which a throne stands.

PAGE 8. l. 232. *image of the mighty world*. 'Also Merlin made the Round Table in tokening of the roundness of the world, for by the Round Table is the world signified by right. For all the world Christian and heathen repair unto the Round Table.'—Malory.

l. 242. *lest one good custom . . .*, lest old established usage, however good in itself, should drift into formalism for lack of change and progress.

l. 259. *island-valley of Avilion*. Avilion is said to have been the name of a valley near Glastonbury where Joseph of Arimathea landed from his boat with the Holy Grail.

l. 263. *crown'd with summer sea*. A Homeric expression. In the *Odyssey* x. 195: 'there is an island round which the sea lies like a crown.'

PAGE 9. l. 267. *a wild carol ere her death*. There is an old tradition that the swan just before her death sings a sweet song. Cf. Shakespeare, *Othello* v. ii. 247: 'I will play the swan and die in music.'

l. 269. *swarthy webs*, the webbed feet of a swan are dark-coloured.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER. PAGE 10.

PAGE 12. l. 93. *ouzel*, blackbird. Several species of European thrushes are also called *ousel* or *ouzel*.

l. 94. *redcap*, provincial name for the goldfinch. See *Life of Tennyson*, p. 379.

PAGE 14. ll. 188, 189. *a Dutch love 'For tulips*: because tulips are much cultivated in Holland.

PAGE 15. l. 202. *Her beauty grew*, &c. Tennyson once said that FitzGerald had guessed rightly that the autumn landscape, which in the first edition was described in these lines, was taken from the background of a Titian.

AUDLEY COURT. PAGE 21.

Aubrey de Vere writes: [1] 'Few of these Idyls are more perfect than *Audley Court*, short as it is. What can be more vigorous than these lines illustrative of simple aversion, as distinguished from hatred or resentment (see ll. 51–4). Those descriptions of nature owe half their charm to the circumstance that the illustrations of men and manners are in entire harmony with them. In them material nature and human life are mirrors that mutually reflect each other.'

PAGE 22. l. 33. *four-field system*, the planting of crops in rotation, i.e. turnips, barley, clover, wheat.

WALKING TO THE MAIL. PAGE 23.

PAGE 24. l. 33. *tilt*, the cloth covering of a cart or wagon (O.E. *telt*).

PAGE 25. l. 63. *A Chartist pike.* The Chartists were a political party in England (1838–48) which contended for universal suffrage, the vote by ballot, annual Parliaments, and other radical reforms as set forth in a document called the *People's Charter*.

l. 76. *flayflint*, skinflint.

l. 91. *Niobe*, the daughter of Tantalus, King of Thebes, whose children were all killed through the jealousy of Diana and Apollo; she is always represented as weeping for them.

EDWIN MORRIS. PAGE 26.

l. 17. *agaric*, fungus.

l. 21. *Crichton.* 'The Admirable Crichton' was a Scottish gentleman of the sixteenth century; he took his degree at fourteen years of age, and was considered a prodigy of learning and ability.

[1] *Life of Tennyson*, p. 873.

PAGE 28. l. 79. *The Latin song I learnt at school.* This refers to Catullus, *Acme and Septimius*, xlv, ll. 8, 9.

. 95. *holms*, evergreen oaks.

PAGE 29. l. 110. *Sweet Gale*, bog-myrtle.

l. 112. *Proserpine in Enna*: Daughter of Demeter, carried off by Pluto to the infernal regions to be his Queen: brought back by Hermes in answer to her mother's prayer.

ST. SIMEON STYLITES. PAGE 30.

This poem was first published in 1842. On Tennyson's own authority we know that the matter is taken from Hone's *Every-Day Book*, vol. i, pp. 35, 36.

In the *Acta Sanctorum* (Acts of the Saints) for Jan. 5 there are three memoirs of a certain St. Simeon the Elder. For May 24 there is an elaborate Greek biography of St. Simeon Stylites, junior. Hone seems to have amalgamated the two. Both evidently wrought miracles, tortured themselves, stood on columns, and died at their posts of penance. The elder died at Antioch about A.D. 460: the younger died in A.D. 592.

PAGE 30. l. 2. *slough*, the dead mass separating from a foul sore.

PAGE 31. l. 57. *Which I despise and hate.* This is an allusion to the doctrine common in the Middle Ages that matter is itself evil, and all good lies in its subjugation.

PAGE 34. l. 169. *Abaddon and Asmodeus.* The *Acta* says about St. Simeon that he was pestered with devils. *Abaddon* is the name of one of the fallen angels. In Klopstock's *Messiah* he repents of his part in the rebellion; the word means destroyer. *Asmodeus*, in Jewish demonology, is the spirit of vanity. In the Apocryphal Book of Tobit he causes the death of the seven husbands of Sara: he is finally conquered by Raphael and bound in Egypt.

PAGE 35. l. 205. *the crown.* The *Acta* does not mention the crown, but speaks of a heavenly odour which exhaled from the saint.

THE TALKING OAK. PAGE 35.

PAGE 35. l. 4. *the chace*, an open hunting ground which is private property.

PAGE 36. l. 19. *plagiarized*, a plagiary is one who purloins and steals the words, writings, or ideas of another, and passes them off as his own.

PAGE 37. l. 45. *Peter's pence.* An annual tax formerly paid by the English to the Pope—a penny for every house, payable on Lammas or St. Peter's Day.

l. 47. *spence*, a larder and buttery.

Bluff Harry, Henry VIII.

l. 50. *offset.* Elizabeth, the offshoot (daughter) of Henry VIII.

l. 55. *gloomy brewer*, i.e. Oliver Cromwell.

l. 56. *like a stork.* 'The stork, a republican bird, is said to have gone out of England with the Commonwealth.'[1]

l. 63. *teacup time*, the days of Queen Anne.

l. 64. *patches*, pieces of black plaster stuck on to the face were thought to enhance the beauty of the complexion.

PAGE 39. l. 123. *holt*, copse.

PAGE 40. l. 175. *blind motions of the spring*, rising of the sap.

l. 183. *vapid*, dead, spiritless, insipid.

l. 184. *anthers*, the part of the stamen of a flower containing the pollen, or fertilizing dust.

ll. 187–8. There are many classical legends of men and women enclosed in trees. Spenser tells of a hapless pair of lovers who were thus transformed by Duessa. Fradubio, the man, spoke in wailing tones to the Red Cross Knight, who was horrified to see blood flowing from the branch he had torn.

PAGE 43. l. 286. *Dryad-like.* A Dryad was a wood nymph whose life was bound up with that of her tree.

l. 292. Dodona in Thessaly had a grove of oracular oaks similar to the famous oracle of Zeus in Epirus. See Soph. *Trach.* 171.

PAGE 44. l. 297. An allusion to the escape of King Charles by hiding in an oak-tree.

LOVE AND DUTY. PAGE 44.

PAGE 44. ll. 4–10. *Shall Error*, &c. Shall Truth be produced by means of Error, and wise temperate rule issue out of wild boastful clamour about Freedom? Shall even transgression of the law lead men to greater moral light, and then Love, the most wonderful of all good things, have no real result at all?

ll. 24, 25. *Knowledge . . . wisdom.* Tennyson always draws a distinction between the two. Knowledge is 'the younger child' to Wisdom, cf. *In Memoriam* cxiv; the one is 'earthly of the mind', the other 'heavenly of the soul'. Also see *Locksley Hall*, 141, 'Knowledge comes but wisdom lingers.'

PAGE 46. l. 84. *sharpest pathos.* The word is used in opposition to *apathetic* in l. 18.

l. 97. *rack*, thin flying broken clouds, or any portion of floating vapour in the sky.

THE GOLDEN YEAR. PAGE 46.

PAGE 47. l. 12. *the daughters of the horseleech.* 'The horseleech hath two daughters, crying give, give.' Prov. xxx. 15.

PAGE 48. l. 76. *and buffet*, &c. Notice the suiting of sound to sense here. Tennyson said 'Bluff to bluff gives the echo of the blasting as I heard it from the mountain on the counter side opposite to Snowdon.'[2]

[1] *Works of Tennyson*, ed. by his Son, vol. ii, p. 335.

[2] Ibid., vol. ii, p. 337.

LOCKSLEY HALL. PAGE 50.

The poem [first published in 1842] was suggested to Tennyson by reading a translation, by Sir William Jones, of an Arabian poem called *Amriolkais*; this poem appeared in a selection from the works of pre-Mohammedan poets called *Moallakāt*. It tells of a poet who, with a company of friends, passes by the place where his mistress had lately been, and makes his moan over the deserted remains of her tent. It has been suggested, however, that Tennyson really owes more to the oriental sentiment and imagery of the tale than to its matter.

PAGE 50. l. 4. *Dreary gleams,* &c., i.e. while dreary gleams of light are flying across a dreary moorland.

ll. 3–6. FitzGerald notes: 'This is all Lincolnshire coast: about Mablethorpe, where Tennyson stayed much, and where he said were the finest seas except in Cornwall.'

l. 8. *Orion,* a large bright constellation on the equator between the stars Aldebaran and Sirius, named after the mythic hunter Orion.

PAGE 51. l. 9. *Pleiads,* a group of small stars in the neck of the constellation Taurus. Only six are distinctly visible.

l. 19. *iris,* prismatic display of colour. The dove's feathers become more beautiful at mating time.

PAGE 54. l. 68. *many winter'd crow.* Rooks are called crows in the northern counties, and live to a great age.

l. 76. *a sorrow's crown of sorrow.* The reference is to a passage in Dante's *Inferno* v. 121–3.

PAGE 57. l. 121. *argosies,* an argosy is a merchant vessel of the largest size.

PAGE 59. l. 155. *wild mahratta-battle.* Mahratta is the name of a famous Indian race.

l. 162. *trailer,* one who pursues a track or scent, as a hunter.

PAGE 60. l. 184. *Cathay,* old name for China.

GODIVA. PAGE 61.

In Sir William Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire* we read that in memory of this noble deed, 'the picture of Leofric and his lady was set up in a south window of Trinity Church in this city (Coventry) about Richard II's time, his right hand holding a charter with these words written thereon:

> I Luriche, for love of thee
> doe make Coventry Tol-free.'

PAGE 61. ll. 1–4. These four lines were not in the volume of 1842, but were added afterwards.

l. 3. *the three tall spires,* St. Michael's, Trinity, and St. John.

PAGE 62. l. 58. *palfrey*, a saddle-horse for the road, a horse for special occasions. O.F., *palefrei*.

l. 66. *one low churl*. In the High Street, Coventry, his effigy is still to be seen, protruding from a window.

l. 75. *a hundred towers*, poetical license. Ancient Coventry is said to have had not more than thirty-two towers.

THE TWO VOICES. PAGE 63.

The original title was 'The Thoughts of a Suicide'. It was begun as early as 1833, though not published until 1842. It is, as Mr. Spedding says, 'the history of the agitations, the suggestions, and counter-suggestions of a mind sunk in hopeless despondency, and meditating self-destruction, together with the manner of its recovery to a more healthy condition.'

The arguments in favour of suicide may be summarized thus. To die is better since

(*a*) life is so full of misery.

(*b*) the beauty of the human frame is no argument in favour of life: even the insects share it;

(*c*) the fact of having *mind* is no argument, because one will not be missed in so vast a universe;

(*d*) though no two are alike, nature is quite insensible to a man's death;

(*e*) misery absolutely overthrows reason;

(*f*) there is no hope of change for the better;

(*g*) the progress of the race is so slow it is no good waiting for an infinite time;

(*h*) nothing can be done by a mind so ill at ease, and sickly;

(*i*) the fear of the judgement of men on the act is only cowardly;

(*j*) even the hopeful dreams of youth were shadows, as were also the desire to attain truth and goodness. The summits are still wrapt in dense cloud;

(*k*) death is an absolute cessation of the storms of life;

(*l*) the idea of immortality is a dream, whereas pain is a reality.

PAGE 63. ll. 16–18. An allusion to Genesis i and the six days of creation.

PAGE 64. l. 30. *hundred million spheres*. Life cannot be confined to this one tiny planet.

PAGE 69. l. 192. the *fold*, the cloud.

l. 195. *Ixion-like*. Ixion embraced a cloud, hoping to embrace a goddess.

ll. 198–9. *a little lower Than angels*. Hebrews i.

l. 214. *secret transport led*. See Acts vii. 54–60.

PAGE 70. l. 228. *kindlier mix'd*; a reference to Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act v, Sc. 5, 'the elements so mix'd in him.' It means here some have happier dispositions.

l. 237. *fix'd and froz'n to permanence.* The same thought is suggested in the *Faery Queene*, in the conflict with despair: how can we know for certain that the pain *will* cease with death?

PAGE 71. l. 270. The *appearance*, or outside signs of death may be quite misleading—since we do not know what death itself *is*.

l. 277. The *simple senses*. The simple senses made Death a king.

l. 278. *Omega*, the last: the last letter in the Greek alphabet.

PAGE 73. l. 350. *Lethe*, the river of forgetfulness, in the infernal regions.

THE DAY-DREAM. PAGE 77.

PROLOGUE.

PAGE 77. l. 16. *Macaw.* A large tropical American parrot.

THE SLEEPING PALACE.

PAGE 79. l. 34. *Oriel*, a recess within a room.

l. 30. *prism*, the prismatic colours; the coloured rays seen in the rainbow. A prism is a solid figure with its sides parallelograms, and the ends equal and parallel. Such a figure, if of glass, breaks up the light passing through it into the 'prismatic colours'.

l. 36. *beaker*, drinking-cup.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

PAGE 80. l. 65. *coverlid*, another form of *coverlet*, possibly from Fr. *couvre-lit*.

l. 71. *doth inform*, doth imbue.

PAGE 81. l. 106. *Magic music*, like music in a game which is loudest when the seekers are nearest the object of search.

PAGE 82. l. 137. *Pardy*, certainly, truly, from F. *pardi* (for *par dieu*).

PAGE 83. l. 166. *the crescent-bark*, the new moon sailing like a boat, attached to a buoy upon a sea of clouds.

PAGE 84. l. 215. *quinquenniads*, periods of five years.

EPILOGUE TO DAY-DREAM.

l. 256. *That float through Heaven, and cannot light.* 'The great bird of Paradise, *Paradisea apoda*, which was the first known representative of the entire family, derives its specific name from having been described by Linnaeus from a skin prepared in the Papuan fashion, with the wings and feet cut off' (quoted from Lydekker's *Royal Natural History* in the Eversley edition).

AMPHION. PAGE 86.

PAGE 86. l. 12. *scion*, a shoot or sprout of a plant; Fr. *scion*.
l. 14. *limber*, pliant, flexible.
l. 27. *pirouetted*, danced; strictly, turned on the toes in dancing.
l. 29. *briony-vine*, called in some parts of England Old Man's Beard, or Honesty.
PAGE 87. l. 44. *poussetting*, a certain movement in a dance.
l. 64. *scirrhous*, knotty.
PAGE 88. l. 92. *spindlings*, tall, slender trees.

ST. AGNES' EVE. PAGE 89.

January 21 is St. Agnes' Day: she is the patron saint of purity.
PAGE 89. l. 16. *argent*, silver.

SIR GALAHAD. PAGE 90.

PAGE 90. l. 1. *casques*, helmets. Spanish *casco*.
l. 5, &c. The peculiar force of the alliteration should be noticed.
l. 6. *brand*: O.E. *byrnan*, to burn; hence a fire-brand, and a sword from its brightness.
PAGE 91. l. 52. *dumb*: the soft snow dulls the sound of horses' feet.
PAGE 92. l. 81. *hostel*, inn.
grange, farmhouse. Lincolnshire word. (Low Lat. *grancia*, from *granum*, corn).
l. 82. *pale*, district enclosed in pales or fences.

EDWARD GRAY. PAGE 92.

This poem was enclosed in a letter to Miss Sellwood written from London, 1840. Tennyson speaks of it as 'a virgin ballad never yet written down'. 'Sweet Emma Moreland,' simple enough, at any rate.

WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL MONOLOGUE. PAGE 93.

PAGE 93. l. 8. *Lusitanian summers*. Lusitania was the ancient name of the district almost coinciding with Portugal.
PAGE 94. l. 35–6. *Against its fountain upward runs*, &c., i.e. I go back to past days.
l. 39. *vinous*, mist, brought back in the fumes of the wine.
l. 42. *Unboding*, not foreboding.
PAGE 95. l. 61. *raffs*, odd things; a raff is a promiscuous heap; chiefly used in the compound *riffraff*, rubbish.
l. 63. *the whirligig of Time*. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, v. i, where the Clown says, 'and thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.'
l. 80. *peptics*, digestion; strictly, the science of digestion.

l. 88. *convolution*, the tortuous folding of an organ, such as is seen in the convolutions or many folds of the brain.

PAGE 96. l. 119. *Ganymede*, cup-bearer to Jupiter.

l. 127. *praising God*, because a fowl when drinking lifts up its head.

l. 132. *Knuckled at the taw*: an expression from the game of marbles. The taw is the large marble.

PAGE 97. l. 137. *thorpe*, village.

PAGE 98. l. 199. *deal in Ana*, a collection of notable sayings: literary gossip, anecdotes, i. e. 'before the days when the interviewers (leeches, ever sucking information) swarmed everywhere collecting gossip.'

PAGE 99. l. 230. *pewit*, a waterfowl (lapwing).

TO—— AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS. PAGE 100.

PAGE 100. l. 9. *the irreverent doom.* Tennyson's later poem of *The Dead Prophet* is a commentary on this, and shows his extreme dislike for the irreverent curiosity of the 'interviewer'.

l. 20. *many-headed beast*, an expression from *Coriolanus*:

> The many-headed beast butts me away.

l. 27. *Shakespeare's curse*, an allusion to the epitaph on Shakespeare's tomb at Stratford:

> Cursed be he that moves my bones.

PAGE 101. l. 35. *the carrion vulture*; cf. *The Dead Prophet*:

> Then glided a vulturous Beldam forth
> That on dumb death had thriven;
> They call'd her 'Reverence' here upon earth
> And 'The Curse of the Prophet' in Heaven.

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN GREECE. PAGE 101.

PAGE 101. l. 3. *Peneian pass.* The river Peneus flows between precipitous rocks and overhanging plane woods.

l. 4. *Akrokeraunian walls*: this promontory is now called Glossa.

l. 5. *Tomohrit*, a lofty mountain in Albania not far from Elbassan. Edward Lear describes it thus: 'That calm blue plain with Tomohr in the midst, like an azure island in a boundless sea, haunts my mind's eye and varies the present with the past.'

Athos, the mountainous peninsula, which projects from Chaldice in Macedonia.

l. 16. *Naiads*, water-nymphs.

l. 21. *him*, &c. Pan, god of shepherds and inventor of the syrinx or shepherd's flute.

mountain lea, an upland meadow.

LADY CLARE. PAGE 102.

PAGE 102. l. 26. *as I live by bread*, common phrase, simply meaning, as I am alive.

PAGE 103. l. 57. *russet*, reddish-brown.

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH. PAGE 104.

PAGE 105. l. 45. *more majestic.* Burleigh House, near Stamford, is one of the most magnificent nobleman's seats to be found in England. Walford's *Tales of Great Families*, vol. i, gives full information about this story.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE. PAGE 107.

PAGE 107. l. 12. *Sparhawk.* Cf. *Geraint and Enid*:

A thousand pips eat up your sparrow-hawk.

PAGE 108. l. 31. *pastern*, the joint next the foot in a horse; or the part between the fetlock and the coffin-joint; here simply foot.

A FAREWELL. PAGE 108.

Dedicated to the Somersby stream.

THE BEGGAR MAID. PAGE 109.

In *Romeo and Juliet*, II. i. 14, there is an allusion to this story:

Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim
When King Cophetua loved the beggar maid.

Cophetua was a legendary African king.

THE VISION OF SIN. PAGE 109.

I

PAGE 109. l. 3. *with wings, that would have flown.* In the *Phaedrus*, Plato compares the soul to a chariot drawn by two winged steeds. Here the rider has already yielded to the pleasure of sense, so the horse is powerless to rise.

II

In this section we have a description of the first intoxication of pleasure. Like the fruit of the forbidden tree in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, it seems to make life more vivid, more full, and every nerve quivers with energy; but the lack of all self-restraint is straining the whole organism.

III

Slowly from the heights of God, retribution comes: but it comes in the form of the discipline of consequences. A cold heavy vapour begins to close in on the palace and its occupants. The death by chill of satiety, the jaded senses, the shattered nerves are the warnings of premature old age.

IV

The youth has become a grey and gap-tooth'd man as lean as death; all faith in man and woman is gone, all shame, all desire. Nothing is left but 'loathing, craving, and rottenness'.

V

When the mocking voice is silent the three spirits of Judgement speak. The first announces what has happened, viz., that the vengeance has come through the wearing out and misuse of the body. The second points out that this crime has ended in another, the crime of malice, hatred of God and man. The third holds out the glimmer of a hope—the man's misery proves that all is not gone, a grain of conscience still makes him bitter, and if that divine discontent goes on, he may even yet see the far-off dawn.

COME NOT, WHEN I AM DEAD. PAGE 115.

First published in *The Keepsake*, 1851.

THE EAGLE. PAGE 116.

PAGE 116. l. 3. *Azure*, blue. Arabic word first used for the colour of lapis lazuli.

MOVE EASTWARD. PAGE 116.

First published in 1842.

PAGE 116. l. 6. *Thy silver sister-world*, the moon.

'BREAK, BREAK, BREAK.' PAGE 117.

Mr. Stopford Brooke quotes this poem as an illustration of the dominance of the man in Tennyson. 'The poem of fullest regret for love drowned in death is written in memory of a man.' 'It is a piece of perfect work fully felt, and fully finished, simple and profound—and with what fine art Nature is inwoven with its passion.'

THE POET'S SONG. PAGE 117.

First published in 1842.

AFTERTHOUGHT. PAGE 118.

This poem appeared in *Punch* (March 7, 1846); it was afterwards printed in *Works*, under the title of 'Literary Squabbles'.

SONNET TO W. C. MACREADY. PAGE 118.

This was first published in *Household Narrative* of 1851.

PAGE 119. l. 7. *Garrick.* David Garrick, actor, poet, and dramatist, 1717–79.

Kemble. Charles Kemble (1775–1854), an English actor, brother of the famous actress Mrs. Siddons, and father of Fanny Kemble.

HANDS ALL ROUND. PAGE 119.

First printed in *The Examiner*, February 7, 1852.

PAGE 119. l. 3. *cosmopolite*, citizen of the world.

l. 15. *Poerio's noisome den.* Carlo Poerio was a Neapolitan statesman and patriot (1803–67). He took part in the Revolution of 1799, and suffered imprisonment on its suppression. He was released in 1802.

PAGE 120. l. 37. *daughter of the West*, America.

THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY 1852. PAGE 121.

When Parliament opened, several of the speakers in the Debate on the Address in the House of Lords protested against the strong feeling in England which the *Coup d'État* had aroused against France, and Napoleon in particular.

This poem appeared under the signature of *Merlin* in the *Examiner*, February 7.

l. 26. *our first Charles.* The Bill of Rights was assented to by Charles I in 1628.

ll. 27, 28. *the second James*, who lost his throne mainly because he tampered with the rights of the Church of England, and led his people to suspect that he wished to make England again Roman Catholic.

PAGE 122. l. 33. *Lewes*, fought in 1264 by Simon de Mountfort and the English barons, against Henry III, who was subverting the liberties of the realm.

l. 34. *Runnymede*, near the Thames, where Magna Charta was signed by King John on June 19, 1215.

ll. 43–5. *Manchester* is the seat of the great cotton-spinning industry.

l. 47. *Thermopylae*, where the small band of Spartans under Leonidas died to a man in their struggle with the Persians. Hence the type of any heroic resistance to tyranny by a few patriots.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON. PAGE 122.

On November 18, 1852, the Duke of Wellington was buried under the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, beside Lord Nelson. Every army in Europe, and every regiment of the British Empire was represented at the funeral; vast crowds—probably over a million people—watched the long procession, doing honour to him, who, 'in his simplicity sublime', had never cared to be great, but as he saved or served the State.

This poem was published on the day of the funeral.

PAGE 123. l. 23. *state-oracle.* Wellington had taken an important part in politics as a Conservative leader. He had a seat in the Cabinet in 1818, and was Prime Minister from October, 1828, to November, 1830.

l. 26. *whole in himself.* A man, who, like King Arthur, reverenced his conscience as his God: such in a deep sense seem self-sufficient—fearing God they have no other fear.

l. 42. *world-victor.* Napoleon, who at one time was master of the greater part of Europe, as well as parts of Asia and Africa.

PAGE 124. l. 49. *cross of gold.* The gilt cross on the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral.

l. 73. *in dispraise.* Wellington opposed the Parliamentary Reforms which were brought forward in 1830, and was in consequence vehemently attacked and even hooted in the streets.

l. 80. *Who is he that cometh?* The spirit of Nelson, 'the mighty seaman,' thus questions the great procession, who are bearing their mighty Dead to his rest.

PAGE 125. l. 96. *he that gain'd a hundred fights.* The Duke never lost a battle, and he is said to have himself told Lord Ellesmere that 'he did not think he ever lost a gun in his life'. Some were taken at various times, but always recovered.

l. 99. *Assaye.* A battle fought on August 23, 1803, against the Mahratta army in India. It was Wellington's first independent command and his troops numbered about one-tenth of the enemy's forces.

l. 104. *The treble works,* the lines of *Torres Vedras* which completely enclosed the peninsula on which Lisbon stands. This incident occurred in the Peninsular War of 1809. Wellington retreated behind his lines followed by the French General Massena. In 1811 the latter retired, and Wellington defeated him at Fuentes de Onoro.

l. 112. The great battle of Vittoria was won by Wellington on June 21, 1813, and in October he forced back Soult, crossed the Pyrenees and drove him to Bayonne.

l. 119. *Again their ravening eagle.* After Napoleon's escape from Elba in March, 1815, he again put himself at the head of the French armies, and threatened Europe.

l. 122. *Duty's iron crown.* Napoleon was crowned with the famous Iron Crown of Lombardy. Wellington sought only that of Duty, strong but hard to win.

l. 123. *that loud sabbath.* On Sunday, June 18, 1815, was fought the battle of Waterloo, when Wellington, reinforced by the Prussians under Blucher, at last put the French guards to flight and crushed Napoleon for ever.

l. 124. *onsets of despair* refers to the desperate charges of French calvary on the squares of the British infantry.

l. 127. *the Prussian trumpet.* They arrived at seven o'clock, only just in time to save the battle.

PAGE 126. l. 137. *shaker of the Baltic.* Nelson's three great victories were at the Nile (August 1, 1798), Copenhagen (April 2, 1801), and at Trafalgar, where he died.

l. 153. *lawless powers.* The French Revolution of 1848 had been followed by insurrections in Austria and Italy, revolutions in Spain Poland, and Hungary, and in 1851 by Napoleon III's *Coup d'État* in Paris. See notes on *The Third of February 1852.*

l. 159. *brute control.* Much attention had been drawn to the Chartists, who, on April 10, 1848, had marched through London in a procession of 20,000 strong. Great alarm was felt lest the movement should end in mob-violence.

l. 162. *one true seed of freedom.* On the Continent most of the revolutions had ended in the revival of despotic rule. England, from the seventeenth century on, had enjoyed a constitutional monarchy, with freedom under 'temperate kings'.

PAGE 127. l. 172. *He bad you guard,* &c. Wellington, in 1848, had strongly recommended the fortification of the Channel Islands and some of the south coast towns.

l. 175. *lour,* threaten.

l. 191. *He never shall be shamed.* The publication of all Wellington's dispatches has only verified this prophecy.

l. 197. *her horn.* Fortuna holds in her hand the *Cornucopia,* or horn of plenty.

l. 205. *before his journey closes,* i.e. the effort will become second nature. As in Watts's wonderful picture of the Happy Warrior, the angel face bending over him will bring a peace deeper than any earthly joy.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE. PAGE 130.

PAGE 130. l. 25. *sabre,* properly a sword with a broad and heavy blade, thick at the back and usually more or less curved like a scimitar; or more generally a cavalry sword.

PAGE 131. l. 34. *Cossack*: name of a warlike people now subject to Russia, occupying the parts north of the Black Sea. From them the Poles organized a body of light horsemen, in which capacity they now form an important element of the Russian army.

THE BROOK. PAGE 131

This poem describes an imaginary brook and not the one at Somersby, which does not 'hurry past thirty hills', or contain grayling.

PAGE 131. l. 4. *scrip*, share certificate; poetry was more to him than getting a hundred per cent. for his money.

l. 6. *how money breeds*: money thus produces money.

mellow metres, soft, pleasant, not crude or harsh.

PAGE 132. l. 8. *The thing that is not*, &c., for the poet (Gk. ποιητής) is a 'maker' or creator of beautiful forms of imagination.

l. 16. *brunding*, scorching.

l. 17. *Neilgherry* (variant for Nilgiri) hills are in Madras, and there, on account of their climate, are built the two sanatoriums of Coonoor and Ootacamund.

l. 23. *coot*, a small water-bird (*Fulica atra*). *hern*, or heron, a large water-bird now rather rare in England, formerly sought after in hawking.

l. 26. *bicker*, originally to skirmish, fight, on a small scale, hence to make any continued agitation or noise, such as the stream over the rocks; it is a frequentative of pick. In the *Princess*, v. 254, we read that a star (Sirius) 'bickers into red and emerald'.

l. 29. *thorps*, villages or hamlets.

l. 44. *fallow*, ploughed land left untilled.

l. 46. *willow weed and mallow*, marsh plants.

PAGE 133. l. 54. *grigs*, crickets or grasshoppers: *high-elbowed* describes the projecting, bent hind legs.

l 61. *waterbreak*, ripple.

l. 80. *a hoary eyebrow for the gleam*, i.e. the arch of the bridge through which you can look down stream is like a grey eyebrow above a flashing eye.

l. 82. *Bonny Doon*, song by Robert Burns. *Doon* is a river and a lake in Ayrshire, Scotland.

PAGE 134. l. 94. *mealy-mouth'd philanthropies*, smooth-tongued sentimentalists, with no real philanthropy. Those who indulge too much in tears over imagined woes have often very little real sympathy for suffering.

l. 103. *pentagram*, a five-pointed star formed by prolonging the sides of a regular pentagon until they intersect; looked upon as a mysterious figure in the Middle Ages.

PAGE 136. l. 190. *Brunelleschi*. The Duomo or cathedral at Florence. The dome is the work of Brunelleschi, who, in 1407, was chosen to complete the great cathedral. Florence stands on the river Arno.

l. 193, *lichen*, a small mossy growth, often covering old stone or wood.

l. 196. *converse seasons.* Tennyson first wrote 'converse seasons', but it was altered in later editions to 'April-autumns' on account of his great objection to too many sibilant or hissing sounds. April in Australia is of course an autumnal month.

l. 203. *bindweed*, convolvulus, climbing plant with bell-like flowers of various colours. *bryony*, also a climbing plant with berries: its *rings* are its spiral tendrils.

THE LETTERS. PAGE 137.

PAGE 137. l. 1. *vane*, weathercock for telling the direction of the wind.

THE DAISY. PAGE 139.

PAGE 139. l. 5. *Turbia*, in Western Riviera.

l. 8. *Monaco.* The little principality of Monaco is on the south-east coast of France.

l. 13. *campanili*, bell towers, specially so called if separate from the church. In Southern Europe they are often built of coloured stone: the most famous of all is the campanile of Florence by Giotto.

l. 16. *amaryllis*, belonging to the same family of flowers as the narcissus, jonquil, and daffodil.

l. 17. *Columbus*, the discoverer, who landed for the first time on the American continent at the mouth of the Orinoco August 1, 1498.

l. 19. *mountain cornice*, where the ridge of a mountain overhangs the valley. The snow cornices in the high Alps are very dangerous to mountaineers.

l. 23. *Cogoletto.* A town on the Italian coast near Genoa.

l. 37. *that hall*, the Palazzo Ducale.

l. 43. *Cascine*, the Park of Florence.

l. 44. *Boboli's ducal bowers*, gardens behind the Pitti Palace.

l. 45. *vignette*, a picture, which has no definite bounding line, originally a running ornament consisting of vine leaves used in Gothic architecture; hence a decorative design at the head of a chapter; hence, as such pictures are often without definite bounding line, a picture which vanishes at the edge.

l. 46. *duomo*, a cathedral church in Italy.

PAGE 141. l. 75. *rich Virgilian rustic measure* of the *Georgics.* Larius (*Georgics* ii. 159) in the ancient name of Como.

l. 79. *fair port below the castle.* Varenna.

l. 84. *Agavè*, a statue of Agavè. She was a daughter of Cadmus, and mother of Pentheus. When the latter tried to stop the Dionysiac festival, Agavè in her frenzy tore him to pieces.

F. D. MAURICE. PAGE 142.

PAGE 142. l. 8. *anathema*, from Greek ἀνάθεμα, anything devoted; hence a curse, hence a ban or curse pronounced by ecclesiastical authority.

PAGE 143. l. 32. *Ottoman*, of or pertaining to the Turks. The word comes from Othoman, a sultan who assumed the government of the Turks about the year 1300.

WILL. PAGE 144.

PAGE 144. l. 2. *he will not suffer long*—because, by psychological law, nature adapts itself to its environment. They who go forward courageously break through the fancied horrors, and as Browning writes, even of death itself,

> Sudden the worst turns the best to the brave;
> The black minute's at end.

l. 15. *whose footsteps halt.* The vacillating life is the most miserable of all—

> Let a man contend for his life's set prize to the uttermost,
> Be it what it may.

TITHONUS. PAGE 145.

In the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite* we read that Tithonus, the son of Laomedon, King of Troy, was beloved by Aurora, the goddess of the Dawn. At his request, she endowed him with immortality, but having forgotten to ask for the gift of eternal youth and beauty, he reached a decrepit old age. In his misery he begged for the release of death, and was in pity changed by Aurora into a grasshopper.

PAGE 145. l. 7. *quiet limit*, the far-off east, the dwelling of the Dawn.

l. 18. *strong Hours.* The Horae, daughters of Zeus and Themis, who presided over the changes of the seasons and kept watch at the gates of heaven: here, Time, personified.

PAGE 146. l. 39. *blind.* The stars pale and grow dim as the sun rises.

the wild team. Aurora's silver chariot, drawn by white horses, went in front of that of the Sun.

l. 62. *that strange song.* The walls of Troy rose to the sound of Apollo's lute.

l. 71. *barrows*, ancient burial grounds.

THE VOYAGE. PAGE 149.

PAGE 149. l. 20. *pillar'd light.* When the sun has sunk below the horizon, it often sends up bright pillar-like streaks of light.

l. 29. *naked moon*, undimmed by mist or cloud.

l. 31. *silver boss.* The moon surrounded by its halo seemed as the silver boss in the centre of a dark shield.

PAGE 150. l. 33. *peaky islet... shapes.* The hilly little island seemed to change its form continually.

l. 43. *ashy rains*, &c. Pliny, describing the great eruption of Vesuvius, mentions that the smoke took the form of a plume of feathers: here the showers of ashes have the same appearance.

PAGE 151. l. 71. *bloodless point reversed*, a liberty gained by lawful means, and not by bloody revolutions.

l. 73. *only one . . .*, who refuses to attempt to find the Ideal, and therefore perishes in despair.

l. 87. *heart of peace*, the dead calm at the centre of the cyclone; beyond it the gale must blow in the opposite direction.

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